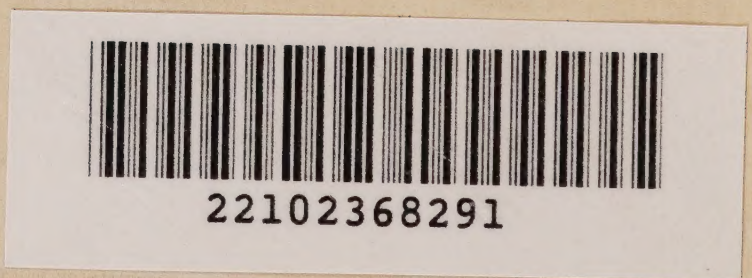
THE
INQUIRER'S
LIBRARY
No. 2

M
10952


22102368291

Dr. F. PARKES WEBER.

13 HARLEY STREET,
LONDON, W.1.

THE BELIEF
IN
PERSONAL IMMORTALITY

THE BELIEF
IN
PERSONAL IMMORTALITY

BY

E. S. P. HAYNES

(Author of *Religious Persecution*, *Divorce Problems of To-Day*, etc.)

[ISSUED FOR THE RATIONALIST PRESS ASSOCIATION, LIMITED]

WELLCOME LIBRARY
General Collections
M
10952

LONDON
WATTS & CO.,
17 JOHNSON'S COURT, FLEET STREET, E.C.
1913

CONTENTS

	PAGE
PREFACE	vii
INTRODUCTORY	1
CHAP.	
I. THE SOUL IN SAVAGE RELIGIONS	7
II. EGYPT, GREECE, AND ROME	21
III. CHRISTIAN EUROPE UP TO KANT	37
IV. THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY	54
V. THE BEARING OF SCIENCE	72
VI. PSYCHICAL RESEARCH AND SPIRITUALISM	91
VII. CURRENT ARGUMENTS	110
VIII. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS	133
CONCLUSION	145
INDEX	153

TO

EDWARD CLODD

"Instar veris enim vultus ubi tuus
Affulsit populo, gratior it dies
Et soles melius nitent."

—HORACE, *Odes*, iv, 5.

WELLCOME INSTITUTE LIBRARY
Coll. welMOmec
Call No.

PREFACE

My friend, Mr. Joseph McCabe, is "the onlie begetter" of this book, because he not only asked me to write it, but also gave me indispensable assistance in Chapters VI and VIII. I owe a great deal to his inspiration and his learning. Dr. Schiller and Mr. Bertrand Russell, F.R.S., have both kindly helped me on a metaphysical point in Chapter VIII.

Mr. Edward Clodd has allowed me to dedicate this book to him as some small expression of my regard and affection for him. I trust that the Horatian lines will seem to others no less appropriate than they do to me; I am at least sure that all who have had the privilege of delightful week-ends at Aldeburgh, will immediately agree that any sunshine is all the brighter, and any day all the more charming, for his company. They will also know that Mr. Clodd, even in the autumn of life, preserves certain genial qualities that we associate with the spring.

It is not easy to write any book when the only available time is three hours in the evening on ordinary days, with only Saturday afternoons and Sundays thrown in; and in my case it would have been impossible without the valuable assistance of Mr. H. Foord, who, working all the week as I do at other matters, gave up a succession of Sunday mornings to taking down at my dictation many chapters which required more than ordinary knowledge of shorthand and other subjects to transcribe.

In writing on a subject which necessarily touches the most sensitive chords of human emotion, I have done my best not

to err on the sentimental side in the manner of certain poets and preachers. Yet I should never have been so deeply absorbed in the subject but for the pain that it originally cost me to lose, first of all, the belief in personal immortality, and finally even the hope of it.

I cannot help feeling that there is a very strong presumption against any kind of survival that implies individual continuity or reunion with those whose presence here diffused incomparable happiness while they still lived. But if such a conviction forces itself upon any of us, surely we had better face it and adjust our philosophy of life—and, indeed, our most practical activities in life—to the conviction.

If death has, indeed, any dazzling surprise in store for us, we shall have lost nothing by trying to put human affairs a little more in order without relying on any future settlement of bad balances, after the example of Mr. Micawber; if, on the other hand, death ends our conscious individuality once and for all, a great deal of it will still survive for others, if not for ourselves, so long as we have acted on what we really thought to be true. Character is immeasurably fortified in the ordinary course of life by the elimination of irrational hopes and fears from our motives, and surely the question of belief in the supernatural is no exception to this rule.

I have freely used the personal pronoun, as there may be many members of the Rationalist Press Association who disagree with my own views on this question.

St. John's Wood,
April, 1913.

ERRATA

P. 31, footnote 1, *for* "ἀθανατὶζειν" *read* "ἀθανατίζειν."

P. 36, last line, *for* "Pomponazzi" *read* "Kant."

P. 88, 4 lines from bottom, *for* "than" *read* "that."

P. 113, line 23, *for* "*Night Thoughts*" *read* "*Last Day*, Bk. ii."

P. 113, line 28, *for* "The distant feet; the distant head the feet," *read* "The distant head; the distant legs the feet."

INTRODUCTORY

Two essential considerations emerge in regard to the desirability of discussing the belief in personal immortality. Would (1) the moral foundations of society, and (2) all human happiness, be destroyed by an universal disappearance of the belief?

1. The moral sanctions are concerned with immortality only in so far as they repose on a belief in future rewards and punishments, which may either exist in the shape of heaven and hell or of reincarnation. I shall hereafter deal much more fully with this subject; but for the moment need only observe that the belief in hell—or even in Purgatory—appears to be dying a natural death outside the pale of the Catholic or Anglo-Catholic religion, while the belief in reincarnation has scarcely become a serious factor in Europe or the English-speaking countries of the world. Writers like Dr. Martineau and Dr. Edward Caird have emphasised the apparent waste of noble characters being suddenly snuffed out when so much effort has gone to build them up—and the same considerations apply to the vanishing of noble intellects. The answer is, of course, that such characters and intellects are easier to replace than seems obvious at first sight, since they themselves are built up by a process of continual reciprocity with others, and this process is uninterrupted through the centuries.

Sometimes, indeed, one may feel bitterly that the

memory of good and great men who have led obscure lives, whose best work has been done in secret, and who have never expressed themselves on paper, irretrievably perishes, while the memory of the fool and the charlatan is kept green by the babble and noise of the world, and, more especially, the press.

The really good worker in any rank of life receives next to no recognition after death as compared with the successful politician, or even the mediocre parson, in the columns of such a clerical journal as the *Times*. But the memory of such men is not the less real for being less conspicuous. Their inspiration lives in their immediate successors, and is thus transmitted from generation to generation.

It is, in a sense, the instinct of self-preservation that comes to the rescue. If a man cordially admires the character or wisdom of a friend who dies, it means that he either aspires to imitate that example, or possesses a character and wisdom which, if not equal to those which are lost, at least respond heartily to the same qualities in others. The death of his friend means, therefore, the death of a part of himself; and it often seems as if this gave rise to much the same sort of repairing process that the lowlier organisms display when cut in two. The influence of the dead friend becomes even stronger after death, while the survivor not only tries to perpetuate the qualities in question, but also searches them out more eagerly in others. Many human ties are cemented by the likeness of a new friend to the dead.

Returning, however, to the question of rewards and punishments, few will dispute nowadays the proposition that the morality which is practised

for its own sake, with no ulterior motives, is far superior to the good conduct produced by the fear of punishments and hope of rewards, however rare it may be. Moreover, if such fears and hopes are indeed essential to the good conduct of society on earth, the necessary rewards and punishments are amply provided in all systems of government and jurisprudence.

2. As regards the question of human happiness, we are frequently assured by such writers as Clough, Tennyson, and Romanes, to take a random selection, that human existence without the hope of a hereafter is nothing but gall and wormwood. We are told of the melancholy of the Old Testament, of the Romans and the Greeks. Yet this is not the melancholy that we associate with the analogy of the guest retiring satisfied from the banquet; it is the melancholy of those who dread the premature snipping of the shears either for themselves or others, and perhaps feel that, for one reason or another, such as poverty or infirmity, they cannot fulfil their destiny. I do not believe that such melancholy would exist in a society which provided equality of opportunity for all, or where medical science had achieved the level foreshadowed by Metchnikoff in his *Essais Optimistes*. What may well sadden Rationalists and others is to think of the vast sums of money at present spent in propagating effete superstitions about the other world which many of those who are paid to do so must gravely doubt, and in some cases ultimately confess to having disbelieved for years, during which they dared not avow such disbelief for fear of starvation. There can be no reasonable doubt that the enormous funds of existing religious bodies, if devoted to such

purposes as public health, would revolutionise our mortality statistics to-morrow. It would seem, moreover, that the ordinary man and woman go through life quite happily without any very clearly defined belief in immortality. Members of religious bodies think very little about it if they enjoy good health, even in spite of dire poverty; while the gloom of unbelievers is not particularly conspicuous.

Happiness is almost entirely conditioned by the proper exercise of our best faculties, as Aristotle pointed out long ago, and in so far as society gives scope for this it makes for happiness; or, as Leslie Stephen would have put it, individual happiness, in the best sense, is bound up with a kind of "social hygiene." At this point, however, we encounter the very serious objection that, though the human affections are among our most important faculties, yet the final parting of death seems almost to stultify them. Here again I can only fall back on what I wrote above as to the repairing processes that seem possible when a friend dies, and on the argument that, if everyone attained the age of one hundred, the loss of a centenarian friend would not inflict on a centenarian survivor, or even on the dead man's lineal descendants, anything like the grief which we now feel in regard to what may properly be considered premature deaths. Once more I assert that the real sting of death—in such a case as death caused by cancer—lies in the reflection that a remedy might have been found for the disease many centuries ago, had the human race devoted to public health all the toil and money and skill that it has devoted to the building of churches, the endowment of bishops, and the preaching of unprovable doctrines to bewildered savages.

It is difficult to generalise about the experience of others. I can only give my own when I say that, even taking things as they are, the alleged consolations of religion are merely an irritant, while the real consolations are those of courage and veracity. The ordinary funeral service, with all its sonorous verbiage, its unconvincing analogies, its insincere references to the sin and wretchedness of life, and its hollow assertions of a bodily resurrection can but aggravate the distress of any thinking person. I can never forget escaping from a church on the worst of all such occasions, and, in the blank misery of the moment, suddenly remembering the magnificent lines, which I had not read for years, of Horace—the poet of all those virtues which have been defamed through centuries of Christian calumny and obscurantism—I mean the virtues of human dignity and self-respect in the worst calamities. This great ode, beginning:

> Quis desiderio sit pudor aut modus
> Tam cari capitis?

is the final and classical expression of the only way to face death.

The greatness and simplicity of this elegy is only enhanced by the devil-worship of the *Dies Irae*, the atrocities of the Inferno, the conceits of George Herbert and Vaughan, or, to come nearer our own time, the vague moanings of Tennyson's *In Memoriam*, and the boisterous interjections of Browning's *Epilogue*.

All who really believe in personal immortality so definitely as to derive comfort from that belief, can well look after themselves and others. With them Rationalism has no quarrel. The quarrel of Rationalism is mainly with such ideas of immor-

tality as have a degrading and debasing effect on mankind, whether it be a Christian hell or a Mahommedan paradise, and not least with the half-beliefs characteristic of those who decline through sheer timidity to face the facts of this matter. On the other hand, it is incumbent on those who think that the belief in immortality is doomed, to have the courage of their opinions.

Our whole philosophy of life depends on the acceptance or denial of the belief in issue, and the exposition of that philosophy has been largely monopolised by the priest. The time has now come to expound the other side of the question; but that cannot be done without some historical sketch of what men have thought in the past.

We have to consider (1) the primitive origins of the belief in dreams, ghosts, revelation, and what is called Animism; (2) the ancient and medieval conceptions of immortality as an ethical necessity which is part of a scheme of divine justice; and (3) the more modern conception of immortality as a desirable development of personal activities and affections. All these factors overlap each other in point of time, but they are all to be found, either together or separately, at different periods of human history.

After dealing with the historical side of the question, I shall naturally have to deal with the current beliefs in, and arguments for, personal immortality, and the bearing of modern science and modern thought thereon.

In Erewhon, for example, we have that notion of the World of the Unborn, a world peopled by disembodied beings who could by fair admittance willingly come to earth. We know, by taking a dose, [illegible] memory and unforgiveness, two married people to get them born. J. F. Harris, Samuel Butler, London 1916 p. 24

Entered at page 176

Extracts in the Note-Books of Samuel Butler, Author of "Erewhon", Selections by H. F. Jones, London: A. C. Fifield, 1912. Entered on p. 204 THS.

Chapter I.

THE SOUL IN SAVAGE RELIGIONS

The Life after Death (Μέλλοντα τὰ τοῦτα)

Not on sad Stygian shore, nor in clear sheen
Of far Elysian plain, shall we meet those
Among the dead whose pupils we have been,
Nor those great shades whom we have held as foes;
No meadow of asphodel our feet shall tread,
Nor shall we look each other in the face,
To love or hate each other, being dead,
Hoping some praise, or fearing some disgrace.
We shall not argue, saying "'Twas thus" or "Thus";
Our arguments' whole drift we shall forget;
Who's right, who's wrong, 'twill be all one to us;
We shall not even know that we have met.
Yet meet we shall, and part, and meet again,
Where dead men meet, on lips of living men. *

—*Samuel Butler* (1835–1902) Philosophical writer, poet and painter.

Nemo me lacrimis decoret neque funera fletu
Faxit: Cur? Volito vivu' per ora virum.

—*Ennius.*

WE are often told that the belief in personal immortality must be true, because it is part of what is called Natural Religion, and that the universal desire for it endorses its truth.

This argument might have more force if the various beliefs entertained by savages were less various and less uncertain. Yet it is not until we reach the more cultured races that we find any

* So do fathers and sons often meet, when their traits and writings are discussed at such societies as those for the study of the History of Medicine, &c. T.H.S.

belief in the resurrection of the body. In the same way, it will appear later that the early beliefs in immortality have for the most part no kind of connection with morality; all the retributive theories of future life are a later growth. Yet, unless we are to believe the universe is full of spirits, on the principle of Animism, the whole doctrine of survival must seem to depend on the resurrection of the body.[1] On this point I need only quote the late Bishop Creighton of London and the late Samuel Butler to illustrate both sides of the question.

About fifteen years ago Bishop Creighton preached a sermon in St. Paul's Cathedral, on the thirty-fourth anniversary of the Guild of St. Luke, to a number of doctors. The sermon was reported in the *Daily Chronicle* as follows:—

> The Bishop of London preached a sermon contending that the true view of the human body was overlooked for many ages. The body was despised as something essentially degraded because men were ignorant of its real powers, functions, and connection with their permanent self. The conception of self, the conception even of soul and spirit, could not be realised apart from the body. There was a time when science rather mocked at the possibility of a resurrection of the mortal frame; but that, the Bishop thought, was changed. At least he had heard of a great biologist saying that if there was a resurrection it must be resurrection of the body. It was impossible to conceive the body and spirit existing without one another. That being so, what a marvellous prospect was opened to the medical man! He might say that the marks of his skill were stamped on certain human frames, to be carried by them into eternity. This might seem imaginative, but the doctor who took such a view would feel a higher sense of responsibility.

[1] Mr. Grant Allen thought that burial *always* led to belief n resurrection, and cremation to belief in immortality; but I do not think that he quite proved his case.

The converse view is admirably set out by the late Samuel Butler in his *Note Books* :—

> I do not doubt that the person who will grow out of me as I now am, but of whom I know nothing now and in whom therefore I can take none but the vaguest interest, will one day undergo so sudden and complete a change that his friends must notice it, and call him dead ; but as I have no definite ideas concerning this person, not knowing whether he will be a man of fifty-nine or seventy-nine, or any age between these two, so this person will, I am sure, have forgotten the very existence of me as I am at this present moment. If it is said that no matter how wide a difference of condition may exist between myself now and myself at the moment of death, or how complete the forgetfulness of connection on either side may be, yet the fact of the one's having grown out of the other by an infinite series of gradations makes the second personally identical with the first, then I say that the difference between the corpse and the till recently living body is not great enough, either in respect of material change or of want of memory concerning the earlier existence, to bar personal identity, and prevent us from seeing the corpse as alive and a continuation of the man from whom it was developed, though having tastes and other characteristics very different from those it had while it was a man.
>
> From this point of view there is no such thing as death—I mean no such thing as the death which we have commonly conceived of hitherto. A man is much more alive when he is what we call alive than he is when he is what we call dead ; but, no matter how much he is alive, he is still in part dead, and, no matter how much he is dead, he is still in part alive, and his corpsehood is connected with his living bodyhood by gradations which even at the moment of death are ordinarily subtle ; and the corpse does not forget the living body more completely than the living body has forgotten a thousand or a hundred thousand of its own previous states ; so that we should see the corpse as a person, of greatly and abruptly changed habits, it is true, but still of habits of some sort, for hair and nails continue to grow after death, and with an individuality which is as much identical with that of the person from whom it has

> arisen as this person was with himself as an embryo of a week old, or, indeed, more so.
>
> If we have identity between the embryo and the octogenarian, we must have it also between the octogenarian and the corpse, and do away with death except as a rather striking change of thought and habit, greater, indeed, in degree than, but still in kind substantially the same as, any of the changes which we have experienced from moment to moment throughout that fragment of existence which we commonly call our life; so that in sober seriousness there is no such thing as absolute death, as there is no such thing as absolute life.
>
> Either this, or we must keep death at the expense of personal identity, and deny identity between any two stages which present considerable differences, and neither of which has any fore-knowledge of, or recollection of, the other.

The whole significance of savage belief is that it relates to a merely *partial* survival of the person, or what has been called the "attenuated reality" of the soul. I cannot do better than cite Mr. Crawley's brilliant book *The Idea of the Soul* on this point. His theory of Animism is not so much based on Sir E. B. Tylor's explanation of ghosts and dreams as on what he calls "Memory-images." Moreover, he makes it clear that Animism is not so much an early religion as an early substitute for what we now call metaphysic. To use his own excellent phrase, "The idea of the soul as the mental duplicate of reality is found in every race of men at a very early stage, and emerges again after being obscured by substitutes."

This view is important, because ten years ago religious thinkers were accustomed to point to Animism as containing the germ of a natural religion, whereas, according to Mr. Crawley's view, it is only natural for men to attempt some rational explanation of the universe to themselves :—

The substance of the soul is attenuated reality. The visual image, which is a replica of the percept, continually takes on the characteristics of the object as they vary with circumstances. The Indians of Canada believe that souls bleed when stabbed with a knife. In the Middle Ages not only were bodies burned alive on earth, but souls were burned in hell. The Kaffir gives his child an emetic to purge him of the Christianity he has learnt at the mission school. In China, Brazil, and Australia mutilation of the body has a corresponding effect on the soul. If, therefore, a dead man is hamstrung or has his limbs cut off, his soul will be harmless. In savage thought acquired characteristics are inherited by the disembodied soul. Souls, as in the Fiji story, are subject to decomposition. The attenuated substantiality of the soul is, of course, due to the fact that it is a memory-image. This possesses volume, yet in a less degree than the percept. The filmy or vaporous quality of the soul is, therefore, due not to its being the breath or the life, but to the fact that the memory-image is fainter and less solid than the object.....The soul is a light fluttering or gliding thing, quick to come and quick to go, hard to catch and hard to detain. Hence it is symbolised by means of birds, butterflies, moths, flies, lizards, and snakes, light or fluttering or rapidly moving creatures. These characteristics are those of the image as it glides along the stream of consciousness. Only concentrated attention can check its movement.[1]

It is curious how little difference there is in these conceptions through all the ages. The above description of the soul is almost identical with the Emperor Hadrian's lines :—

Animula, vagula, blandula,
hospes comesque corporis,
quae nunc abibis in loca
pallidula, rigidula, nudula,
nec, ut soles, dabis iocos.[2]

We now have to ask ourselves how the idea

[1] *Idea of the Soul*, by A. E. Crawley, pp. 208, 209, and 211.
[2] See also Tylor's *Primitive Culture*, Vol. I, pp. 456 and 457.

that this fugitive relic of man may be immortal originates, and how far we are concerned with mere survival or with immortality.

Mr. Crawley's answer contains the same doctrine as that which is so beautifully expressed in the sonnet at the head of this chapter, and also in a well-known sonnet on death by Thomas Hood. Mr. Crawley gives us the following lucid explanation of the problem :—

> The germ of its immortality is the fact that it exists in the brains of others. A man dies, but his image remains. The fact of death does not necessarily alter the character of the memory-image, though such alteration is often found. The permanence of the soul depends on the length memory survives, on the affection the dead man inspires, or the strength of his personality. .....The savage has no idea of absolute immortality. The soul itself dies; its existence, that is, depends on the memory of others. But neither has he any idea of absolute death of the organism. He avoids reflection on so disagreeable a subject, and never realises the fact of his own annihilation. Death for him is rarely due to natural causes; if it were not for magic, as producing disease and death, and for violence, man would live for an indefinite time. There is a flavour of scientific truth about this view. The soul is, by the very fact of its origin, separable from the personality. Its connection with the latter is likely to be mysterious for the naive consciousness. In the presence of the person it coalesces with him or disappears; it reappears in his absence. Or when present; if the subject closes his eyes he sees the soul, if he opens them he sees the man.[1]

Mr. Crawley clinches the position in the following words: "The soul dies, being a replica of the living person, yet it lasts longer, because his memory survives him. The death of this memory is the death of the soul."[2]

[1] Crawley's *Idea of the Soul*, p. 212. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 224.

At a later stage of culture we come to the ideas of resurrection or re-embodiment of the soul. The dead are anxious to live again, yet how can they do so satisfactorily except in a body? The soul is apt to get weak if it is separated from the body, and Mr. Crawley is no doubt right in pointing out that the resemblance of children to their parents impressed upon the savage mind the theory of reincarnation, although this reincarnation is usually confined to grandchildren in order to avoid obvious difficulties. Moreover, among more primitive races there is no very definite line drawn between the souls of men and of beasts, so that human souls can easily pass into the bodies of the lower animals. This all leads up to the more elaborate system of Hindu philosophy, where the body is only the temporary receptacle of the soul, and the migrations of the soul from one body to another become bound up with an elaborate code of retribution. Indeed, Buddhism draws no very clear line between plants and animals.

It has been contended that the same doctrine finds its way into the religion of ancient Egypt, and from Egypt into Greece. But Tylor very justly observes that in Egypt the doctrine was rather that of a "mystic transformation of the soul" than of transmigration, and these ideas were ultimately developed into the doctrine of the bodily renewal or resurrection in Heaven or Hades. This doctrine becomes prominent in Persia, and is brought to its most complete development in the Christian religion under the Pauline influence. The strict theory of transmigration, however, survives in the later Jewish philosophy, among the Manichæans, the medieval Nestorians, and the Druses of Mount Hermon.

In the foregoing sketch I have thought it better to omit the various limitations of the doctrine of survival; but it is significant not only that the savages conceive the soul as mortal, but also that they exclude certain human beings from survival altogether. Thus Tylor points out that in the Tonga Islands a future life is only the privilege of a certain caste; and the same observation applies to the North American Indians, "where the chiefs and medicine-men, in paint and feathers, are to smoke and sing and dance with their forefathers, while the common people have no life after death, but rot in their graves."[1]

Mr. Crawley points out that the Congo natives entertain no hope of future life for women; and women, as distinct from *houris*, are certainly not prominent in Mahommedan ideas of paradise. In Guinea we find ethical opinions introduced in the case of the Nicaraguans, who believed that, if a man lived well, his soul would ascend to dwell among the gods; but, if ill, it would perish with the body.[2] Again, the Guinea negroes believed that there would be a last judgment, in which a great priest would kill the wicked a second time with a club which he kept for the purpose. Even those who were not killed by the club might be drowned by the god if they had not observed a certain ritual. There does not seem much distinction between the idea of the soul dying with the body or that of its dying a second death after leaving the body.

It may be instructive, at this point, to examine

[1] Captain Smith's *History of Virginia* (1624), quoted by Tylor. This may be compared with the Christian doctrine of "Conditional Immortality," with which I deal in ch. viii.

[2] Tylor's *Primitive Culture*, Vol. II, p. 22.

in more detail the savage ideas of the soul without particular reference to the question of survival. Dr. Tylor mainly divides savage ideas of spirits into (*a*) the souls of individual creatures capable of survival, and (*b*) other spirits which range up to the rank of powerful deities. He defines the actual conception of the soul among the lower races as follows :—

> It is a thin, unsubstantial image, in its nature a sort of vapour-film or shadow ; the cause of life and thought in the individual it animates ; independently possessing the personal consciousness and volition of its corporeal owner, past or present ; capable of leaving the body far behind, to flash swiftly from place to place ; mostly impalpable and invisible, yet also manifesting physical power, and especially appearing to men, waking or asleep, as a particular phantasm separate from the body of which it bears the likeness ; continuing to exist and to appear to men after the death of that body ; able to enter into, possess, and act in the bodies of other men, of animals, and even of things.[1]

In this connection he particularly mentions the importance of the shadow in such conceptions as we find even in Dante's *Purgatorio*. Mr. Crawley also explains in a most interesting manner how the soul comes to be what he calls a "miniature." He shows how the memory-image is reduced from the size of the real object, which accounts for such conceptions of the soul as we find in the medieval pictures—*e.g.*, as a naked child issuing from the mouth of the corpse.

The same process takes place in regard to the voice. Just as, in the often-quoted dream of Achilles, the ghostly voice is a twitter or a thin murmur, so, too, the modern spiritualist tells us

[1] Tylor's *Primitive Culture*, Vol. I, p. 429.

that the voice of the spirit is like a whisper. "To put it shortly, just as we have the size of the soul standardised to a miniature photograph, so its voice is that of its master's voice when heard through the telephone."[1]

Mr. Clodd, in his little book on Animism, has pointed out that the modern spiritualists not only to-day photograph souls, but also estimate their average weight at from three to four ounces. This would roughly correspond to the savage notions of the soul as material; and, as Mr. Crawley points out, all substance is the same to early men—"It is neither material nor immaterial, but neutral." The idea of the soul as material perpetually crops up in the case of feasts for the dead, which have lasted until our own time. The custom survives in our habit of placing flowers on the tomb, as also in human sacrifices at funerals such as those of Chinese and Indian widows. It is remarkable that no reference to this tradition was made by any of the newspapers in the recent instance of Admiral Nogi and his wife committing suicide on the occasion of the late Mikado's funeral in Japan; some dim tradition like this was probably working in their minds.

Finally, I should like to add a few remarks on the ethical significance of survival or immortality among savages. There are, as I have shown, two main theories of a future life—(1) continuance, and (2) transmigration. Neither doctrine involves any theory of retribution in its earlier stages, and, except for the occasional instance above mentioned, no such idea emerges much before the higher

[1] *Idea of the Soul*, by A. E. Crawley, p. 207.

cultures of the Oriental religions. Tylor refers to an intermediate doctrine between what he calls mere continuance, and reward and punishment. He points out that at this stage a man's condition after death is held to be a result of, rather than a compensation or retribution for, his condition during life. He thinks that this probably led up to the doctrine of future reward and punishment. The lower races, therefore, receive little practical impulse from vague anticipations of life beyond the grave. He does not, however, appear to go as far as I do as regards the doctrine of future rewards and punishments. I believe that this doctrine has very little effect on the more cultured races, and this must be obvious from the fact that severe penalties are enforced by laws against the offence of perjury, and that most of the Churches have devised elaborate machinery for escaping future punishment before the time arrives for its infliction.

Probably the strongest ethical influence of a future life has come through ancestor-worship. To use Tylor's phrase, this worship keeps up the "social relations of the living world." "The dead ancestor, now passed into a deity, simply goes on protecting his own family and receiving suit and service from them as of old; the dead chief still watches over his own tribe, still holds his authority by helping friends and harming enemies, still rewards the right and sharply punishes the wrong." Where these "social relations" do not exist, it is usual for savage tribes to live in terror of the souls of the dead as harmful spirits. This phenomenon of *manes*-worship is world-wide. Tylor describes its variations in the two Americas, on the

continent of Africa, in Asia (where he specially mentions the Hindu and non-Hindu tribes of India), and in the customs of Ceylon, Japan, and China. It was a prominent feature in the religion of Rome, and found its way into modern Christianity in the doctrine of the communion of saints, as also in all the ceremonies of All Souls' Day. Even in modern Spain bread and wine are offered on the tombs of the dead on the anniversary of their decease, and the same custom of the funeral feast holds good as regards Eastern Europe in the Greek Church.

The influence of the dead must always be ethically important at any stage of barbarism or civilisation, even if they are not believed to have survived. Adult life depends almost entirely upon moral habits which are formed in childhood, and which bear with them memories of many who are probably dead. The more we read about savage beliefs and feelings, the more we realise the unity of human nature. Savage conceptions of the spirit-world have a close resemblance to what we read even in the works of learned professors like the late Mr. William James. The modern man tends to feel that he will only live so long as he is remembered; he is dimly conscious of the presence of the dead within a few weeks after the death. In some cases he fears the dead; in others he feels, however irrationally, that the dead are guarding and guiding him. He leaves flowers on the grave of the dead, and often celebrates the anniversary of the death by some kind of feast or ritual.

It is said that Descartes killed the theory of Animism by denying souls to animals and reserving

them for human beings. Whether Descartes was sincere, or whether he merely wished to propitiate the Church by this exception, modern thought at least tends to abolish this distinction. Perhaps the principal distinction between modern thought and primitive beliefs is the effort of modern thought to rid itself of the primitive picture that early men made to themselves of the soul. The idea of the "wraith" will probably always continue in so far as it is associated with telepathy; for appearances of the dead, at the moment of death, are as widely accepted among moderns as they ever were among savages. Yet we try to rationalise our ideas of the dead when we think of them after death; we try to think of them as they were in life, and not as bloodless, twittering shadows, or as luminous bodies externally bearing "marks of a surgeon's skill," or lack of skill.

No modern writer has so well expressed this sentiment, which is likely to become more and more diffused as years go on, than Mr. H. G. Wells in his *First and Last Things*. "I suppose," he writes,

> that is the real good in death, that the dead do stay, that it makes them immortal for us. Living, they were mortal; but now they can never spoil themselves or be spoilt by change again. They have finished—for us, indeed, just as much as themselves. There they sit for ever, rounded off and bright and done. Beside these clear and certain memories I have of my dead, my impressions of the living are vague, provisional things. And as soon as they are gone out of the world and become immortal memories in me, I feel no need to think of them as in some disembodied and incomprehensible elsewhere, changed, and yet not done. I want actual immortality for those I love as little as I desire it for myself.....

> I have a real hatred for those dreary fools and knaves who would have me suppose that Henley, that crippled Titan, may conceivably be tapping at the under-side of a mahogany table, or scratching incoherence into a locked slate! Henley tapping! for the professional purposes of a Sludge! If he found himself among the circumstances of a spiritualist *séance*, he would, I know, instantly smash the table with that big fist of his. And as the splinters flew surely York Powell, out of the dead past from which he shines on me, would laugh that hearty laugh of his back into the world again.
>
> Henley is nowhere now, except that, red-faced and jolly like an October sunset, he leans over a gate at Worthing after a long day of picnicking at Chanctonbury Ring, or sits at his Woking table praising and quoting the Admirable Bashville, or, blue-shirted and wearing the hat that Nicholson has painted, is thrust and lugged, laughing and talking aside, in his bath chair along the Worthing Esplanade.
>
> Bob Stevenson walks for ever about a garden in Chiswick, talking in the dusk.[1]

That, indeed, describes how the dead live for us moderns, for we can preserve the picture without confusing the creatures of our imaginative memory with any mumbo-jumbo of superstitious terrors.

[1] Op. cit., pp. 239–41.

Chapter II.

EGYPT, GREECE, AND ROME

Nam veluti pueri trepidant atque omnia caecis
In tenebris metuunt, sic nos in luce timemus
Interdum, nilo quae sunt metuenda magis quam
Quae pueri in tenebris pavitant finguntque futura.
—*Lucretius*, "*De Rerum Natura*," Lib. II., ll. 55–58.

The Egyptian conception of immortality is probably as old as 4000 B.C., and at least 3000 B.C. The doctrine was combined with most rudimentary ideas of God, and was not wholly consistent with itself. The main idea of the Egyptian was to go on as long as possible; he would have liked to attain the age of 110, and he disliked the idea of stopping. His ideas of the hereafter were extremely complicated, but they have been very clearly summarised by Dr. Wiedemann in his book, *The Doctrine of Immortality in Ancient Egypt*. There are six immortal elements, which are only re-united in the case of the righteous. These are:—

(1) The *Ka*, the divine counterpart of the man which corresponds to the Memory-image; this could live without the body, but the body could not live without the Ka, and it required feeding. The Ka sometimes visited the mummy, when it was supposed to grow; but it had an independent existence, and did not meet the man again till the last judgment.

(2) The *Ab*, or heart, which was immortal. The heart was removed from the body by the embalmers, and consequently the mummy had to be given an artificial heart, which was usually a scarab made in hard, greenish stone, fashioned in the image of the beetle, which was the symbol of resurrection. The heart also journeyed from the regions of the other world till it met the dead man in the Hall of Judgment.

(3) The *Ba* was the soul, and is represented as a human-headed bird. It flew to the gods after death, but was supposed to come back to see the mummy from time to time. It also required feeding. It corresponds to the winged figure of the soul in Greek pictures, to the Roman butterfly, and to the little child or small naked man that we see in medieval pictures coming out of the mouth of the dead.

(4) The *Sahu* represented the hull of the man without contents; it is depicted as a swathed mummy.

(5) The *Kahib*, or shadow, had also a separate existence. When its owner died, the shadow went forth alone to the realms of the gods.

(6) *Osiris* was the counterpart of the mummy. It is the dead man without soul and life, but with an *interim* kind of existence, feeling, and thought. Its necessity was due to the fact that the mummy was never seen to rise again, as it ought to have done, according to the Egyptian belief. The mummy, however, relentlessly remained in its chamber, so the Osiris was invented as a counterpart which went on a journey into the underworld. The *Book of the Dead* very fully describes this journey, at the end of which the Osiris finds itself

in the hall of double Truth. It is tried by various judges, and the heart is weighed in a scale against the symbol of Truth. If the scales turned in his favour, then the God Thoth commanded the heart to be restored to the dead man, and to be set again in its place. This done, all the immortal elements were restored to the Osiris, which was admitted by the gods into their circle. This continued individuality was denied to the wicked, in whose case there was no re-union of elements, although presumably the separate soul did not die, but led a colourless, because impersonal, existence with the gods. The life of the dead was an idealised earthly life, and seems to have given the Egyptian just the sort of continuance which he wanted. Here the development of the belief stopped, but in Greece these ideas germinated into far more various theodicies.[1]

The early religion of Greece is nothing but a kind of tribal Animism. Hades, like the Jewish Sheol, is a gloomy place where everything is forgotten; it is populated by mere shadows of men whose consciousness is no more than the consciousness of a dream. I need not give any selection of passages from the Iliad and Odyssey to illustrate my meaning, since this has already been very amply done by Plato in the Third Book of his *Republic*.[2]

Later on, about 700 B.C., under the Peisistratidæ, we find a new worship of a non-tribal character growing up in Greece. It bears marked traces of the Egyptian doctrine of metempsychosis, which is

[1] Although the *name* of Osiris is used to designate the soul going through the underworld, Osiris himself was the god of the dead, and the souls appeared before him. The souls of the righteous *became* Osiris, and were identified with him.

[2] Davies and Vaughan's translation, p. 76.

thus carried on for a time, whereas in India the doctrine was suppressed in Buddhism, which merely substitutes a fresh ego for the soul, and has no God.

This new worship centres round Orpheus, a legendary minstrel of Thrace, who had a special connection with the underworld by reason of his descending there to fetch back his wife Eurydice.

This worship started in Thrace, and spread to the religious centres of Greece, especially Athens and South Italy. The Orphic worshippers also invented the legend of Dionysus, who was supposed to be a fresh child of Zeus. These Orphic beliefs were crossed at an early date by the beginnings of a religion which centres round the teaching of Pythagoras of Samos. Even so distinguished a scholar as Dr. Gomperz admits that it is impossible to disentangle all the threads of this fusion. He remarks, however, that the Orphic elements are visionary, while the Pythagorean elements are rational; and whereas the Orphics located the soul in the "reformatories of Hades"—of which we shall hear later—between each incarnation, the Pythagoreans thought that souls were like dust particles floating about in the air, and always ready to enter any body. Later on, when both teachings become blended, great stress is laid on the element of retribution.

Pythagoras thought that he would solve the problem of evil by his teaching about another world. Life was a punishment for sin. He also taught that the soul was of divine birth, that it had been a god, and would again be a god, after death. The soul had fallen from its divine estate, and had to do penance for 1,000 years; at the end of that time it was subject to the punishment of drinking the

waters of Lethe. There are also in the ritual many allusions to "cold water" which have now found their way into the Catholic ritual under the name of *refrigerium*.

We can, moreover, trace a connection with the early Christian writings through the nature of the sins punished, and Dr. Dietrich has fully dealt with these ideas in the *Apocalypse of St. Peter*.[1] These same ideas descended to the Gnostics of the second century, while they also spread to the Jews through the Maccabees. The Essenes and the Pharisees both held, like the Orphics, that the body was a prison. The influence of Pythagoras is particularly conspicuous in the case of Plato, who came across the Pythagoreans in the course of his wanderings.

Orphic worship is recorded as flourishing at Athens in the sixth century. There it upset the old tribal notions of religion more easily than was elsewhere possible, and it was combined with the worship of Demeter in Eleusis. Initiation was a necessary introduction to the mysteries, but the initiated were in no sense a secret society.

The immortality and the future blessedness of those who shared in the mysteries was a great feature of the cult. This worship was incorporated with the cult of Dionysus when Peisistratus ordained that Dionysus should be added to the number of Eleusinian deities, and that his statue should be carried in solemn procession by the worshippers from Athens to Eleusis.

From this time onwards a number of quite definite conceptions become diffused all through

[1] *Nekyia*, Leipzig, 1893.

Greek literature up to the first centuries of the Christian era. The main notions are that the wicked lie in pools of mud, whereas the righteous live in a glorified condition; for example, they are sometimes described as having haloes on their heads, which are covered with crisp, curling hair. There are constant allusions to a sort of purgatorial fire, which in the Christian religion became degraded to everlasting fire as a means of torture. We also find many allusions to man-eating monsters in Hades, which are like the Hell-gods of the Indians and the Nile-horse of the Egyptians; these animals can also be traced in the "Last Judgments" of the Christian era, which we see in medieval churches and in such places as the Campo Santo at Pisa.

I need not attempt to give extracts illustrating the wide range of the Orphic religion, as Dr. Dietrich has done this very well in the book which I have already cited, and which ought by now to have been translated into English. It may be as well, however, to remark that references are to be found in the Homeric hymns, Empedocles, Herodotus, Pindar, Plato, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Aristophanes (particularly in his play, *The Frogs*), Apollonius Rhodius, Xenophon, Lucretius (who mentions the Orphic punishments), Virgil (particularly in the Sixth Book of the Aeneid), Horace, Plutarch, the Apocrypha, Lucian, Apuleius, and in early Christian literature, where Orpheus is a well-known figure.

The descent of Orpheus into Hades is also a very common theme in the Catacombs and vase paintings of the early Christians.

I will now turn from the religious ideas of Greece to Greek philosophy, which is particularly

important, because in these days many turn to philosophy for proof of personal immortality as religious influences wane.

One of the earliest Greek philosophers is Thales, whose ideas on this subject partake of Animism, inasmuch as he regarded all things as animated and full of dæmons and gods, and every physical motion as a sign of life. I have already dealt with Pythagoras, but may here add that he conceived the doctrine of a world-soul, and that either he or his followers first suggested the much-debated idea of the soul being a "harmony of the body."

We then come to the Eleatic school, comprising Xenophanes, Melissus, Zeno, and Parmenides. In this school we principally find the notion of absorption in a single substance, which comes from Indian Pantheism, and leaves little scope for personal immortality. The same observation applies to the well-known philosopher Anaxagoras and his doctrine of the *Nous*, or universal Intelligence, which led to his being banished from Athens.

It is, of course, difficult to say exactly what opinions were held by Socrates, as distinct from Plato; but most scholars are agreed that the *Apology* represents substantially what Socrates said at his last trial. In that noble speech his attitude to another life is completely Agnostic, and he insists that all will be well with him whether his personality survives death or not.

The most serious champion of immortality is undoubtedly Plato; but it is very difficult to decide whether he really believed in the survival of individuality in any sense which we should consider important. Few would desire a perpetual reincarnation in which only the faintest glimpses of memory

shed any light on the previous existence of the personality. Plato was, on the one hand, absorbed in the Pythagorean beliefs with which he came in contact in his journey to Italy after the execution of Socrates, and, on the other hand, carried away by his doctrine of Ideas. Traces of his Pythagorean beliefs are found in the myths at the end of the *Republic*, in the *Timæus*, and the *Phædo;* in this connection it is interesting to note the mention of a fiery stream in this last dialogue.

Both in dealing with the Pythagorean beliefs and the doctrine of Ideas, he shows himself first and foremost a poet. As his disciple and critic, Aristotle, pointed out, abstractions were as real for Plato as perceptions. The same habit of thought may be seen in the instinct of mankind to depict a beautiful female figure holding scales, in order to make real to themselves a quality so abstract as Justice. It is in this way that Plato came to regard the realities corresponding to definitions as other than the objects apprehended by sense. A philosopher given to abstract thought comes in time to regard his abstractions as even more real and concrete than the real and concrete things which the abstractions are invented to classify. To take an example, Plato was accustomed to teach that the idea of a table was more real than the table itself. He left out of sight the fact that any given table is only the result of a long series of attempts by generations of mankind to make such an article. The idea of a table no more sprang to birth at once than the real article did when men began making something to satisfy the purpose which a table serves. This is, of course, clearer to us in modern times, as we are familiar with the idea of Evolution.

The *Phædo* is the dialogue in which Plato argues most elaborately in favour of immortality He points out that souls do not come out of nothing, and therefore must have pre-existed eternally, just as they will continue to exist eternally. He strengthens this proposition by the suggestion that we are constantly reminded in odd ways of our previous existence. Much of what he writes in this connection might be re-inforced from a quite opposite point of view by some of the writings of Samuel Butler in such books as *Life and Habit.* Plato also deduces the immortality of the soul from the fact that the soul alone can apprehend the Ideas, which are at once causes of existence, objects of cognition, and principles of causation. He would never have admitted the Christian theory of each soul being created as each human being comes to life, for this would have conflicted with his notions that the sum of force is constant, and that generation out of nothing is impossible. Yet it is difficult to extract any definite conviction of personal immortality from the *Phædo.* If we look for this, we can find it, perhaps, only at the end of the *Phædrus*, where the souls have a vision of the Ideas of Justice, Temperance, and Knowledge ; yet even in this dialogue he emphasises the tripartite nature of the soul, and insists on the fact that only the rational part of the soul is immortal.[1]

[1] The late Mr. Archer-Hind, writing in 1883, thought that, "although Plato knew very well that neither he nor anyone else could demonstrate the immortality of individual souls, yet he was strongly disposed to believe, at least at the time the *Phædo* was written, that every soul, on its separation from the body, will not be re-absorbed in the Universal, but will survive as a conscious personality, even as it existed before its present incarnation." This is not my own view, for what it is worth ; and I am not sure whether Mr. Archer-Hind himself continued to think so in later years.

One doctrine, however, is characteristic of all that Plato wrote, and that is that the wise man and the philosopher need not fear death; and, as Mr. Archer-Hind points out in his beautiful introduction to his edition of that dialogue, this is the main lesson that Plato meant to convey in the *Phædo*. Nothing shocked Plato more than the idea that men should go through life in terror of bogies invented by priests. He also emphasises this at the beginning of the Third Book of the *Republic*, where he desires the young to be protected from the craven attitude of mind that is engendered by descriptions of the underworld.

From Plato the transition is natural to Aristotle. It would take me too long to try and set out the main foundations of Aristotle's philosophy. For him the soul is to the body what form is to matter, what the real is to the potential, what the sight is to the eye. The soul, being the form and the immanent end of the body, is neither in itself body nor conceivable without the body. Where the body is bereft of its soul, the soul ceases to exist. The late Dr. Gomperz defines Aristotle's belief as follows:—"The rational principle implanted in man before birth returns after his dissolution to the place whence it came—the ether of the celestial regions."[1] This, he writes, was the predominant opinion in Athens at about the end of the fifth century. The opponents of this view criticised it because it did not explain why the mind took so long to grow up in youth. Aristotle's reply was that the mind had to become gradually accustomed, like the eye, to brilliant light, and that it

[1] *Greek Thinkers* (Gomperz), Vol. IV, Eng. trans., p. 200.

did not become so accustomed till after childhood had passed. He also held that the mind itself was always fresh, although the instrument might be impaired by disease and old age.

Aristotle never seems to have grappled conclusively with the inconsistencies of this doctrine, which are probably only reconciled by some such doctrine as Leibnitz's Monadology. Probably he conceived of an universal principle of intelligence always bubbling up in individuals and finding fresh expression as the individual body died. We find something of the same idea in the poems of George Meredith.

Like Plato, he most strongly emphasises the necessity for the wise man to ignore death. Man, he writes, should always live, so far as he can, as if he were immortal.[1] That is the only way to get anything done, whether in the realm of action or of thought, and in so far as a man lives a life of contemplation he approaches to a region where everything is immortal and partakes of immortality. Perhaps Aristotle's meaning can be most clearly expressed in such a sentence as that of Mr. Bertrand Russell's at the end of his *Problems of Philosophy*. "Through the infinity of the universe," he writes, "the mind which contemplates it, achieves some share in infinity." And again: "Through the greatness of the universe which philosophy contemplates, the man also is rendered great and becomes capable of that union with the universe which constitutes its highest good."[2]

[1] His words are "ὅσον ἐνδέχεται ἀθανατίζειν."
[2] *Problems of Philosophy*, by the Hon. Bertrand Russell (Williams

From Aristotle I pass to Epicurus, who was born at Samos in 342 B.C. He thought that philosophy is chiefly concerned with the art of living happily, and the main purpose of studying physical laws is to protect human beings against the terrors of superstition. Man, he wrote, was, like everything else, an aggregate of atoms; every soul is composed of fine atoms, and its envelope, the body, is composed of coarser particles; both body and soul are dissoluble like all else, and, though only fools seek death, it is also folly to fear it, since he upon whom it comes has ceased to exist.

The doctrines of Epicurus are best known to the world through the grand poem of Lucretius, entitled *De Rerum Natura*. Few poems appeal so forcibly to the modern Rationalist as this great work, and perhaps no poet has ever done more for mankind than Lucretius in emphasising the realities of life and death and the way in which they should be met.[1]

We now come to the Stoic philosophy, which begins with Zeno, who was born in 340 B.C. The Stoic philosophy was largely Pantheistic, and its ideal was that man should live in accordance with nature. The chief practical effect of Stoic philosophy was the fiction of the *Jus Naturæ*, which had such an important influence on Roman law, and hence on all civil law.[2]

and Norgate), pp. 246 and 250. I cannot too strongly recommend the readers of this book to read this valuable little volume, and especially the last chapter, from which I have quoted these words.

[1] For those who cannot read the poem in the original an excellent translation of selections by Mr. Henry Salt has recently been published by Messrs. Watts & Co.

[2] *Religious Persecution*, by the Author, p. 77.

Their doctrine was mainly ethical, and had very little to do with any other world. The late Professor Henry Sidgwick writes of the Stoic school:—

> The belief in immortality was very dubiously held where it was not altogether dropped.....Of the older teachers we are told that according to Cleanthes all souls survive bodily death—according to Chrysippus only the souls of the wise; and it is noted as a peculiarity of Panætius that he denied survival altogether. Epictetus had clearly discarded the belief; on the other hand, Seneca in some passages expatiates on the bliss of the soul released from its bodily prison in a manner almost Platonic; in other passages, however, he seems to balance between extinction and change much as Marcus Aurelius does.[1]

After the Stoics comes the sceptical school of Pyrrho and the New Academy; but from this point Greek philosophy, with the possible exception of Plutarch, ceases to be important, and it is necessary to give some account of Roman beliefs.[2]

The early religion of Rome is as animistic as most religions are in their first stages. The *manes* of the dead haunted the grave, and received meat and drink from the survivors; but this ancestor worship never led up to any hero worship as in Greece. As time went on religion was apparently kept up at Rome entirely for the benefit of the uneducated, though this was seldom admitted. It was, however, bluntly said by the Greek Polybius, who lived in the circle of the Scipios. It is true that we find early traces of the Orphic religion in the Etruscan notions of an underworld, and that Oriental beliefs and ideas were constantly

[1] *History of Ethics*, p. 102.

[2] Plutarch thought that man was composed of spirit, soul, and body. He has to die twice before he can become a spirit pure and simple.

being introduced into Rome; but the Romans were nothing if not practical. Their idea of a god was a person with whom to drive bargains on purely mundane matters, and they were not disposed to look much further. Religion, like philosophy and the fine arts, they were accustomed to import from Greece and other parts of the world, more as an intellectual amusement than as a matter for serious reflection; moreover, they were unacquainted with Greek philosophy before that philosophy had reached a fairly sceptical stage. Even Cicero, who displayed an interest in philosophy and in the question of immortality, professed to do little more than give his countrymen Greek philosophy in a Roman dress—though, as Professor Sidgwick points out, his claims are not usually over-modest.

Cicero regards immortality as highly probable, though he considers that philosophic proofs of it are untrustworthy. He thinks that there will be a happy future life for everyone, but that there is no sort of Hell.

I have already indicated the views on this point of Seneca, Epictetus, and Marcus Aurelius, which on the whole represent the views of educated men in the ancient world with regard to death. The Roman view is particularly interesting, because in their utter lack of interest in things of the mind as opposed to the sphere of action the Romans strongly resembled the English, and in the present state of English thought the likeness is very striking. I do not believe that anything more Roman could be found than such a poem as the late Sir Alfred Lyall's "Theology in Extremis,"[1] where he makes a

[1] Contained in *Verses in India*, by Sir Alfred Lyall.

sceptical Englishman die at the hands of Mahommedan rebels in the Indian Mutiny rather than bow the knee to Mahomet. Here we have all the Roman respect for a religion as something national, and to be respected as a symbol of nationality, although probably untrue as a matter of speculation.

This is also the attitude underlying the religious toleration displayed both by the Roman Empire and the British Empire. The Romans would tolerate any religion which did not blatantly conflict with their own political supremacy. It is remarkable that the English, whose public attitude to sex problems is merely that of the untaught savage, tolerate obscene paintings in India when they are connected with Indian religions.

The Romans, no doubt, thought that some sort of religion was necessary to keep the uneducated in order; and in the nineteenth century there were many Freethinkers who even considered it necessary to conform to public worship simply because they thought that the collapse of Christianity would mean the collapse of public morality and the social institutions which were founded thereon. So Goldwin Smith thought when he wrote that the collapse of Christianity would entail "a very bad quarter of an hour for society." An ancestor of my own, whose favourite poet was Lucretius, and who was undoubtedly a Freethinker, invariably went to church on Sunday afternoon, though not in the morning, read family prayers, and divulged to but one or two members of his enormous family that he was not a Christian believer.

We find much the same conditions among the modern Jews and the modern Japanese, where the

populace have their superstitions, and the educated classes keep up the ritual as no more than a tradition. Nothing is more interesting or more futile than to speculate whether this condition of things is or is not a stable equilibrium. The introduction of Christianity soon put an end to it so far as the Roman Empire was concerned; and before even the empire had time to decay the Pope had become the "ghost of the Cæsars," and sat upon their throne.

In the next chapter I shall try to trace the different phases of the belief in immortality which we find in Christian thought, from the time of the early Fathers to that of Pomponazzi.

Chapter III

CHRISTIAN EUROPE UP TO KANT

Justorum autem animae in manu Dei sunt, et non tanget illos tormentum mortis.....Et si coram hominibus tormenta passi sunt, spes eorum immortalitate plena est.
(*Liber Sapientiae*, III, 1 and 4.)

The Christian conception of bodily resurrection alters very little as the centuries go on. The doctrines of 1800 are about the same as they are in the year 1. There are, however, certain slight exceptions I have before mentioned—for example, the Gnostics, who in the second century still retained many of the Orphic notions in regard to a future life. The belief in the millennium must also not be omitted. This finally disappeared, as it was bound to do, in the year 1000 A.D.; and the Church has been too prudent since then to expose any of her doctrines to the test of verification at any date, however remote.

Again, we find the belief in Purgatory discarded by the Protestant reformers, partly because it is not mentioned in the Bible, and partly because it was at the root of the whole doctrine of Indulgences which gave rise to the Lutheran revolt in the first instance.

Anyone who wishes to realise in a vivid and concrete manner the beliefs of the Church as

regards a future life, need only read Dante's *Divine Comedy*, which is based on the most orthodox philosophy of the Middle Ages—namely, that of St. Thomas Aquinas. It must not, however, be presumed that the medieval Church was untroubled with heresy. The Gnostic doctrines came down to the Paulicians, and were not finally extinguished until the massacre of the Albigenses in the thirteenth century.

In that charming novel *Aucassin and Nicolete*, it is interesting to note that the hero dislikes the idea of going to Paradise, since it contains nothing but old priests and lame old men and diseased paupers. He expresses a preference for hell, since to hell go the "goodly clerks and goodly knights that fall in tourneys and great wars, and stout men-at-arms and all men noble. And thither pass the sweet ladies and courteous that have two lovers, or three, and their lords also thereto."[1]

On the whole, however, orthodoxy prevailed without much exception, and the doctrine of the resurrection of the body was carried to such extremes that frescoes of the Last Judgment—such, for example, as that at Torcello—show lions and other wild animals vomiting human bodies which they had eaten centuries before.

Yet, however uniform ecclesiastical teaching may have been, there is every kind of variety in the philosophy of the soul during this period—and that philosophy is in direct continuity with the philosophy of antiquity. Roughly speaking, the philosophy of Plato predominates till the thirteenth

[1] *Aucassin and Nicolete*, done into English by Andrew Lang, p. 9. (David Nutt.)

century, when Aristotle came back to Europe through the East. Even then the Aristotelian doctrines were read in a Platonic sense.

The controversy reaches back to the Stoics, who conceived of an universal Fire force, and later on of what they called πνεῦμα, which is what we call Spirit. A peculiar power was originally attributed to anything like air, wind, or breath. In fact, Aristotle connects this idea with vital heat. The Stoics used the idea in order to harmonise the soul and the body; but with them spirit was a physical principle. This idea was curiously reversed by Platonic philosophy and Christian theology, for these conceptions of Spirit as separate from matter at once reversed the interpretation of the word "Spirit," which is conceived as immaterial instead of material.

The work of Philo the Jew, who was born a few years before Christ, shows the transition-stage of these notions. His ideas of Spirit are both physical and incorporeal. Philo takes the soul out of the body, and this results in the notion of spirit ceasing to have any physical associations. The process was completed by Plotinus (born 205 A.D.), who definitely wrote of the soul existing in abstract separation from the body. Yet he still conceives of souls as separate spiritual substances, so that something like a physical element remains.

This belief is carried on by the early Fathers, who adopted the notion of the soul as refined matter; and St. Augustine, who remains the ruling authority on the subject until the time of St. Thomas Aquinas, was essentially a Neo-Platonist. St. Augustine's soul is a single substance: "As attached

to the body, it has sensitive and vegetative powers; as superior to the body, it exercises reason."[1]

We see that the soul has to have a substance different from that of the body, or else it would not be immortal; but we are surprised to find that it is so bound up with the body that one substance seems compelled to interpenetrate the other.

Thus we see how the Platonic notion of the soul was adapted to the use of Christian philosophy; but in order to show how the philosophy of Aristotle found its way into Christian thought, it is necessary to trace the history of his philosophy among the Arabs, since it was through them that Aristotle returned to Europe. This school of Arab philosophy arose between the tenth and twelfth centuries in Bagdad and Damascus, Africa, and Spain. It is a peculiar freak in the history of Islam, and was not encouraged by Mahommedan theologians. The Mahommedans became acquainted with Greek philosophy through Persia, and about the tenth century Aristotle was freely translated into Arabic. I have before mentioned the ambiguity of Aristotle's doctrine of the soul. The Arabs adopted the Alexandrian solution of the problem—namely, that the soul is not separable from the body except in thought, and that it comes into existence and perishes with the body.[2]

This doctrine was very clearly formulated by Averroes (1227–1274). Averroes also separated reason from the soul. He assigned all the operations of thought in man to a superhuman

[1] *Pietro Pomponazzi*, by the late A. H. Douglas, p. 19.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 17. This valuable treatise has been of the greatest assistance to me as regards the whole of this period.

principle of thought. It is noteworthy that Averroes defends the influence of his opinions on morality, and points out that such morality is higher than that which is due only to considerations of rewards and punishments.

The attempt to refute Averroes was the principal object of St. Thomas Aquinas, at whose suggestion many of Aristotle's works were translated from the Greek, and they were the groundwork of his commentaries. He attacks the Averroist doctrine of the unity of reason by arguing that this contradicts the multiplicity of human personalities, and he insists that, according to the proper interpretation of Aristotle, the active intellect is a power of the soul. In spite of the Aristotelian doctrine of the soul as the form of the body, St. Thomas separates the soul from the body. St. Thomas therefore selects exactly what is most convenient for the doctrine of immortality, both from Aristotle and from Neo-Platonism. Yet, when he asks himself how the intellect can operate as an intelligence after the soul has been separated from the body, he merely says that this problem cannot be solved by the physicist. St. Thomas is careful to reject any suggestion of the soul pre-existing, or emanating from the divine substance, or being propagated by the parents; it results from a special act of creation in each case.

The teaching of Duns Scotus (1266–1308) is remarkable for the fact that, in contradistinction to St. Thomas, he ascribes to the soul the power of determining itself quite independently of the reason. The "will to believe" is, therefore, a prominent part of his doctrine. He maintained that there is no rational proof of the immortality of the soul.

I now come to Pietro Pomponazzi (1462–1524), who, alone among the European philosophers of the Middle Ages, set out to restore what he considered to be the Aristotelian doctrine of the soul being mortal. He maintained that if the soul was really the form of the body, it could not exist in a disembodied state or be a separate substance. St. Augustine had stated that there was a sensitive and vegetative soul, as well as an intellectual soul, and that the intellectual soul was alone separable from the body. Pomponazzi argued that intelligence, *as human*, essentially depends on a corporeal organisation. He also argued that the separability of the soul was incompatible with the unity of the human being, and that this doctrine, in fact, attributed two different natures to the same being. He confutes Duns Scotus by denying "the abstract scholastic fiction of the intellectual power possessing specific content of its own, apart from that which is furnished to it by experience, from sense primarily, and subsequently by the operation of memory, imagination, and rudimentary thought."[1]

I will not enlarge further on Pomponazzi's refutation of scholasticism, as this has been so admirably and fully explained by Mr. Douglas; but it may be as well to give a short sketch of what he considers would be the ethical effect of his doctrines. He is anxious to point out that morality is elevated when made independent of rewards and punishments, although he does not object to the prudent legislator imposing a belief in a future life where it is thought necessary for social order. The legislator is not concerned with philo-

[1] *Pietro Pomponazzi*, p. 196.

sophic truth; he is only concerned with good living. Man aspires to be perfect; but he can only attain a perfection appropriate to his condition and place in the universe. The appetite for immortality is merely unreasonable. What men miss as individuals by death, they gain in the sense that the human race is an organism in which the different parties combine for a common end. The individual is so much a part of society that he is only real in relation to society. This is all rather an interesting anticipation of arguments which are familiar enough to-day, but must have been very startling in the fifteenth century. Pomponazzi, however, advanced to a position which must have startled his contemporaries even more. Aristotle had always maintained that the end of man is intellectual contemplation; Pomponazzi regards this as a purely divine pursuit, and states that a man's true end is to be found in the exercise of moral reason and in the moral conduct of life. A man is only truly happy in so far as he is morally good; but every man has sufficient knowledge to enable him to fulfil his moral vocation as a man; and, after all, he is only of intermediate rank in the hierarchy of the universe. Pomponazzi supports his argument that virtue is its own reward by examples of irrational creatures dying for one another and to preserve the species. They have no life after death, yet they have an infallible instinct which makes it worth while for them thus to die.

With the Renaissance comes a revival of Neo-Platonism in the works of such men as Pico della Mirandola, but there is nothing new for me to deal with in their writings. The intellectual intoxication of the sixteenth century leads to much heterodox

thought such as we find in Paracelsus (1493–1541). Among his curious notions was that of the heavenly or astral body, which is responsible for all arts and natural wisdom. At death this body goes back to the elements, but the astral body is absorbed by the stars. The destruction of the astral body takes longer than that of the earthly body, and this is the explanation of ghosts.[1]

I now come to Giordano Bruno (1548–1600). He reverted to something like the Pantheism of the Stoics. Universal intelligence is regarded as the highest faculty of the world-soul, which is one and the same in plants and animals and men. Bruno's life was so adventurous that he may not have had time to develop all his ideas; but, in so far as the soul is concerned, he certainly anticipates something of what Spinoza and Leibnitz have to say about it. Bruno was burnt at the stake in Rome when Descartes (1596–1650) was four years old; and it is significant that Descartes stopped writing in 1633, when he heard of Galileo being condemned by the Inquisition. These are interesting facts as bearing on the question whether his distinction between the souls of men and of animals was intended to satisfy the Church, or represented his own reflections on the subject.

In reading history after the Reformation we are often too much inclined to under-estimate the gross tyranny that was still exercised over all independent speculation. When we consider that Hobbes is said on one occasion to have burned his manuscripts on

[1] It may be of interest to mention that Pomponazzi believed in ghosts, although he did not believe in the immortality of the soul. He gives various explanations of his belief, which are of great interest, but too long to set out here.

hearing the rumour of an attack on him for blasphemy, that Spinoza dared not publish the *Ethics* in his own lifetime, and would probably have been prosecuted for blasphemy had he lived longer, we begin to realise how limited philosophers were in regard to the expression of their opinions. No modern man can fail to observe how intolerably the expression of opinion is limited even to-day by purely economic considerations. Such considerations, however, are infinitely weaker than the instinct of self-preservation which impels a man rather to destroy the work of his brain than to risk his life. There is possibly some such excuse for the remarkably fantastic distinction that Descartes makes between the souls of men and animals. He tells us that a man's soul interpenetrates him all through, but is situated in the pineal gland inside the brain.[1]

Animals, however, are merely automatic, and can have no soul, since they have no reason. He argues that they have no reason because they cannot communicate their ideas to man, and, even if they can speak to each other, they should be able to make themselves understood by man if they had reason. Descartes does not seem to realise that the animals might accuse man of having no reason because he cannot communicate more intelligibly with them than they can with him. In the second place, Descartes asserts that animals can only do things by an instinct which has no connection with reason. This reasoning, and the assertions on which it is

[1] The pineal gland is, I believe, the atrophied trace of a third eye which pre-historic reptiles and earlier animals possessed. At the moment of writing there is a lizard at the Zoological Gardens which has a rudimentary eye of this kind at the top of its head.

based, are so flimsy that it is difficult not to attribute them to a fear of the Jesuits, who were then very powerful in France, and with whom Descartes took care to be on good terms.

Before going on to Spinoza and Leibnitz it would be unpatriotic not to mention Henry More (1614–1687) and Ralph Cudworth (1617–1688). These men both studied at Cambridge in the seventeenth century, and both left an effect on the world of thought. More conceived that minds are under a fourth dimension, and are therefore not confined, like bodies, within the limits of impenetrability, whereas bodies are impenetrable because they cannot contract and expand. All bodies, and, in fact, the universe itself, are interpenetrated by quickening spirits which in their lowest stages are called germs. Cudworth revived what the Greeks called Hylozoism, which is very much like what the late Professor Clifford called mind-stuff. According to this theory, every component part of the physical world contains conscious or unconscious thought.

The Pantheism of Bruno is finally developed in the works of Spinoza (1632–1677). Many of my readers will no doubt be familiar with the excellent monograph of Sir Frederick Pollock on Spinoza, and I cannot do better than quote Sir Frederick's own words:—

> Spinoza's eternal life is not a continuance of the existence, but a manner of existence; something which can be realised here and now as much as at any other time and place, not a future reward of the soul's perfection, but the soul's perfection itself.[1]

[1] *Spinoza: His Life and Philosophy*, by the Right Hon. Sir Frederick Pollock, Bart. Second edition, p. 275.

Sir Frederick goes on to point out that this has been the nobler interpretation of almost all the religions of the world except Islam :—

> Whether it is called the life eternal, the Kingdom of God, Wisdom, Liberation, or Nirvana, the state of blessedness has been put forward by all the great moral teachers of mankind as something not apart from and after this life, but entering into it and transforming it.[1]

Spinoza himself writes :—

> If we consider the general opinion of mankind, we shall find that they are indeed aware of the eternity of their own mind ; but confound the same with duration, and ascribe it to the imagination or memory which they suppose to remain after death.[2]

The philosophy of Leibnitz (1646–1716) bears more directly on the question of immortality than the bolder philosophy of Spinoza. His Monadology may have been partly suggested by the doctrine of Cudworth, and the term was previously used by Bruno. Mr. Benn suggests that he derived his general idea of force from Spinoza and his type of force from human personality, which, " following the lead of Aristotle rather than of Plato, he conceived as an entelechy or realised actuality and a first substance."[3]

The monads, or ultimate elements of existence, rise in a hierarchy from plants to God, God being called the Monad of Monads or the Supreme Monad. The soul monad is superior to the body

[1] *Spinoza : His Life and Philosophy.*

[2] A distinguished modern thinker once wrote to me : " If I had to put in one sentence what I think about personal immortality, I should say that in eternity many things do not matter, and for aught we know the individuality we think so much of may be one of them. And such has been for something between 2,000 and 3,000 years (at least) the opinion of the greater part of Asia ; besides which many Christians and Moslems have gone as near it as they dared, not to mention some Jews."

[3] *History of Modern Philosophy*, by A. W. Benn, p. 62.

monad, but they are each adjusted like two clocks which are constructed to strike the same hour at the same time. This is due to what is called the doctrine of pre-established harmony. There is no complete death, either of the body or of the soul; however dead the body may seem to be, it contains a tiny organism which continues its life at a later stage. This idea has a certain analogy with the Weismann theory of a germ-plasm which continues the same through all generations. In the same way, the soul never dies, but is in a state of being developed or enveloped. Man is not only indestructible like an animal, but his reason assures the permanence of his personality. He will rise again identical with himself, and the transformation of his bodily organisation in accordance with his moral worth may safely be left to nature.[1] At the end of the Monadology we have a short sketch of the City of God, in which there will be no good action without a reward or bad action without a punishment.

Whether Leibnitz seriously believed in the theological apex of his system may be doubtful, but his doctrines as they stand are full of suggestion for modern thinkers, who are more and more drifting towards what William James has called a pluralistic universe.[2]

For in the light of modern science Pantheism becomes increasingly difficult to reconcile with the facts of nature, whereas the researches of such men as Dr. Bastian into the origin of life more and more impress us with the idea of an universe in

[1] *La Monadologie*, par Emile Boutroux, pp. 65 and 66.
[2] According to this theory, Monism is only one of many hypotheses.

which life and intelligence are always springing up sporadically, or, one might almost say, like mushrooms in a field. The old ideas of unity and perfection may conceivably be due to some false analogy drawn from the idea of bodily perfection. Certainly what we know about the ultimate destiny of this planet is quite inconsistent with any idea of an universal and omnipotent intelligence unless we are to suppose that the function of humanity in the universe is to be continued in some other planet, which is, scientifically speaking, fantastic.

At this point I must not omit mention of Bayle (1647–1706). His dictionary had a profound influence on his generation, and his numerous references therein to immortality are as sceptical as the rest of his doctrine. He points out that the ancient philosophers believed in a material soul both for man and beast, but he scarcely mentions any belief in personal immortality for animals. It may, however, here be relevant to quote an extract from Mr. Clodd's book on *Myths and Dreams* :—

> Although the belief in the immortality of brutes has no place in serious philosophy, it has been a favourite doctrine from the Kamchadales, who believed in the after-lives of fleas and bugs, to the eminent naturalist Agassiz, who adverts to the doctrine in his *Essay on Classification*. And in a list of 4,977 books on the nature and future of the soul given in Mr. Alger's elaborate critical history of the subject nearly 200 deal with the after-life of animals.[1]

Reference should also be made to Swedenborg (1688–1772). This remarkable man gave himself up to the study of the soul in 1734, when he was forty-six years of age, and never abandoned the

[1] Clodd, *Myths and Dreams*, p. 208.

subject till his death in 1772. In 1744 he stated that Heaven was opened to him, and he was introduced by the Lord into the spiritual world, where he gives a full account of the scenery and occupations of Heaven and Hell, the origin of evil, the sanctity and perpetuity of marriage, and many other subjects. In 1757 the Second Coming of the Lord took place, and Swedenborg was divinely appointed to be the prophet of the New Jerusalem. He held constant intercourse with spirits of all kinds, and his followers told extraordinary stories illustrating his gifts of prophecy and second sight. The interesting part of Swedenborg's writings is that he never shrinks from explaining any detail in connection with his doctrine. For example, he asserts that the soul does not leave the body until decomposition sets in, and he describes exactly what happens to the soul when it does leave the body. I do not know how far his doctrines prevail to-day; but I have come across highly intelligent Americans in Boston who believe every word that he wrote, and at least one of them is a business man of the highest capacity.

The main stream of philosophy in the eighteenth century is certainly sceptical. There are, no doubt, rare exceptions, like Swedenborg; but from the end of the Middle Ages the belief in immortality is generally held by philosophers to be based on nothing but either revealed religion or the necessity for a scheme of divine justice. The latter doctrine often degenerates into the notion that the belief in future rewards and punishments must be kept up at all costs in order to preserve public morals. This idea is particularly conspicuous in the writings of Locke.

Taking the principal thinkers, more or less in order of date, we find that the attitude of Voltaire (1694–1788) is purely agnostic. He does not wish for immortality, yet there are times when he seems to think that human justice demands it. He is content with the belief in God as a bulwark of public morality, and does not need immortality for that purpose. But he maintains that the nature of God and of the human soul is alike unknowable.

Shortly after him comes a little group of thinkers who are called Materialists—such as Buffon (1707–1788), who believed in organic molecules which do away with the necessity for a Creator. His doctrine was developed more fully by Diderot (1713–1784). Diderot was deeply impressed with the function of the nervous system in psychology, and dogmatically declares against freedom of the will and immortality. Even nowadays it is difficult to realise what any person would be like apart from his or her nervous system, and in an universe of more than three dimensions; but believers usually avoid such speculations. Baron d'Holbach followed this up by a book entitled *Système de la Nature*, which was published in London in 1770. He maintains that nothing exists but matter and motion, and that what is called the soul is only a part of the body; the soul really amounts to no more than molecular motions of the brain. These three last-named thinkers certainly anticipated by conjecture a great deal that science has since verified.[1]

This highly sceptical train of philosophy was

[1] The materialistic view of the soul in the eighteenth century appears best in Helvétius's *De L'Esprit* and Cabanis' *Rapports du Physique et du Moral de l'Homme.*

reinforced by the works of Hume (1711–1776). As Mr. Benn points out, Hume's denial of the metaphysical self being a simple and continued substance, as distinguished from particular states of consciousness, at once undermined the argument for natural immortality derived from the supposed unity of the thinking substance. Moreover, this idea of unity has not been replaced by philosophy since Hume's death, although his own theory has encountered destructive criticism.

All this epoch of speculation finds its natural culmination in the work of Kant (1724–1804). Kant so severely limits the human faculties in metaphysic that what he calls Pure Reason can do very little for those who wish to be convinced of immortality. Kant expects them to be content with the guidance of what he calls the Practical Reason. From Practical Reason Kant deduces his Categorical Imperative, which commands every man to act so that the principle of his conduct may be the law for all rational beings. This moral law also demands an ultimate coincidence between happiness and virtue; and, since this coincidence is impossible in this life by reason of human weakness,

> Kant argues that there must be an unending future life to secure time enough for working out a problem whose solution is infinitely remote, and finally there must be an omnipotent moral God to provide facilities for undertaking that somewhat gratuitous Psyche's task. Before Kant moral theology had argued that the judge of all the world must be right.....it was reserved for him to argue conversely that for right to be done such a judge must exist, and that therefore he does exist.[1]

[1] A. W. Benn, *History of Modern Philosophy*, p. 99. I have made this extract as I agree with every word of Mr. Benn's criticism, and cannot possibly improve on his terse and happy phraseology.

I close this chapter with Kant because he seems to me to initiate a period of sentimental philosophers and thinkers who, to use their own phrase, "appeal to the heart instead of to the head," or, in Tennyson's words, invite the world to believe what cannot be proved, on the strength of flimsy presumptions. There is no more reason to presume that virtue and happiness completely coincide than to presume that all morality depends upon a doctrine of future rewards and punishments.

In the next chapter I propose to consider the philosophy of the nineteenth century, which was deeply influenced by modern science. It is only fair to remember that the medieval schoolmen largely based their conclusions on what passed for physical science in their own day, although it was in fact little more than a series of conjectures evolved by men whose knowledge was entirely bookish, and was completely unfortified by any direct experimental contact with the subject-matter. The only exception was Roger Bacon, whose example was certainly not encouraging to any thinker who valued his life or liberty.

Chapter IV.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

I warmed both hands before the fire of life;
It sinks, and I am ready to depart.
—W. S. Landor.

I closed the last chapter with Kant, whose belief in immortality was ultimately based on nothing more than a belief in the moral government of the world. This has by now become a great prop to thinkers who believe in immortality, and who prefer not to tackle the problem on its own merits. The best specimen of this argument is contained in the following extract from an address that Edward Caird, the late Master of Balliol, delivered in 1908, and which is the more remarkable because his earlier writings on the subject do not seem to show much interest in the belief itself. The address runs:—

> I think, however, that this is a very one-sided and narrow view of the subject—a view which leaves out of account the indications in human life itself which seem to authorise us to regard death as a transitionary stage in a life that does not find completion in this world. Our ultimate reason for believing anything that goes beyond our immediate sensible experience, is that we cannot give a rational account of the facts, cannot conceive them as part of an intelligible order, if it be not true. And on this ground I think that there is strong evidence for man's future existence.

> The whole system of things, of which man is the highest part, can be made coherent with itself only on the view that his earthly life is a part of a greater whole. This is the only view that is consistent with the conviction that the universe is a rational, and therefore a moral, system; or, what is the same thing, with the existence of a God who governs the world. Now this means that we should believe in a future life because we have good ground to believe in God and in goodness as the ultimate principle of all things.[1]

As this volume is only one of a series, I am obliged to leave the moral government of the world to Mr. McCabe, who has written about Theism; yet the doctrine can scarcely be accepted without question. My eldest daughter, when four years old, was told at school that the Almighty was a kind personage who looked after children and little birds with a care that never failed. No sooner had she arrived home than she saw the cat devour a sparrow in the garden! She was naturally impressed with the idea that the divine government of the world was marked by a certain carelessness which she deplored, even when she was told that many cats would starve if they did not eat birds. However, this confidence that God will endow the good with immortality need not occupy us here. It is at least a significant admission that we cannot prove personal immortality.

In the first half of the eighteenth century the movement of philosophy is all towards Pantheism, which usually implies a denial of *personal* immortality. Thus Fichte (1762–1814) rejected immortality in favour of a mystical union with the divine. Schelling largely followed Spinoza. Hegel regarded

[1] This address has now been reprinted with others by Messrs. Maclehose & Co., of Glasgow.

the question of immortality with a certain contempt, as he thought his own system of philosophy much more satisfying.[1]

Of Schopenhauer's philosophy Mr. Benn remarks:—

> Suicide is not allowed; for, while annihilating the intelligence, it would not exclude some fresh incarnation of the will. And the last dying wish of Schopenhauer was that the end of this life might be the end of all living for him.[2]

It seems scarcely necessary to mention that both James Mill and his more famous son John Stuart Mill did not believe in immortality. Nearer our own time, thinkers so opposed as Mr. Herbert Spencer on the one side, and the late Mr. T. H. Green and Mr. Bradley on the other, agree in leaving no room for personal immortality. The problem has for the most part been abandoned by philosophers and psychologists, and left to theologians.

I shall not deal fully with the bearing of science on the question in this chapter; but the belief in personal immortality was obviously weakened by two important events of the nineteenth century. In the first place, the belief in the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures was abandoned. This produced a feeling of extraordinary anarchy in many Protestants for whom the Bible had been no less infallible than the Pope is for a Catholic. The second event was the rising popularity of Darwin's

[1] Besides the famous conversation with Heine, Hegel, in replying to a critic, wrote: "Spirit is lifted beyond all those categories which include the ideas of dissolution, destruction, dying, etc., not to speak of quite as express determinations." Erdmann, *History of Philosophy*, English translation, Vol. III, p. 28.

[2] Benn's *History of Modern Philosophy*, p. 122.

ideas from 1860 onwards. The unbroken line between all varieties of mammals made it necessary for the theologian who accepted the Darwinian theory, to postulate the creation of the human soul at some stage or other in the evolutionary series, and Descartes' capricious distinction between the animals and man lost the last appearance of plausibility that it may ever have had. Indeed, it became quite the fashion for sentimental old ladies, and even others like Lewis Melville, to assert that animals had souls as well as men.

Further speculations were started by Dr. Charlton Bastian in regard to the origin of life, which have not yet borne full fruit. But even though his investigations have been disgracefully neglected in the orthodox world of science, there is no doubt a growing persuasion that no clear line can be drawn between the organic and the inorganic. The consequence of these vast changes in thought is that such occasional philosophers as do concern themselves with personal immortality, write on very broad and non-Christian lines. They consider the alternatives of transmigration and re-incarnation, and whether personal immortality involves memory or does not. They rely not only on the moral government of the universe, but also on "Natural Religion," the alleged universal desire for immortality, experiments in psychical research, false analogies drawn from the scientific doctrine of the conservation of energy, and many other considerations which are quasi-rational, and have nothing whatever to do with Christian revelation as such.

Believing Christians used to talk much of the philosophy of Lotze, who was considerably influenced by Leibnitz's Monadology. Yet even

Lotze claims immortality, "not for all souls, but only for those which realise in themselves a nature of such high value that owing to it they cannot be lost to the whole."[1]

I need not trouble the reader of this book with any of Lotze's excursions in the physiology of the brain, which are more quaint than impressive.

The nearest approach to Lotze in orthodoxy is possibly Professor Royce, of Harvard, whose *Conception of Immortality* is summarised as follows :—

> (1) The world is a rational whole, a life, wherein the divine Will is uniquely expressed. (2) Every aspect of the Absolute Life must therefore be unique with the uniqueness of the whole, and must mean something that can only get an individual expression. (3) But in this present life, while we constantly intend and mean to be and to live and know individuals, there are, for our present form of consciousness, no true individuals to be found or expressed with the conscious materials now at our disposal. (4) Yet our life, by virtue of its unity with the Divine Life, must receive in the end a genuinely individual and significant expression. (5) We men, therefore, to ourselves as we feel our own strivings within us, and to one another as we strive to find one another and to express ourselves to one another, are hints of a real and various individuality that is not now revealed to us, and that cannot be revealed in any life which merely assumes our present form of consciousness, or which is limited by what we observe between our birth and death. (6) So, finally, the various and genuine individuality which we are now loyally meaning to express gets, from the absolute point of view, its final and conscious expression in a life that, like all life such as Idealism recognises, is conscious, and that in its meaning, although not at all necessarily in time or in space, is continuous with the fragmentary and flickering existence wherein we now see through a glass darkly our relations to God and to the final truth.[2]

[1] Erdmann's *History of Philosophy*, Vol. III, p. 309.
[2] *Conception of Immortality*, by Professor Royce, pp. 78-80.

This summary might have brought balm in Gilead, but that the Professor immediately adds this sentence:—

> I know not in the least, I pretend not to guess, by what processes this individuality of our human life is further expressed, whether through many tribulations as here, or whether by a more direct road to individual fulfilment and peace.

Perhaps the thinker of most popular interest in our time is the late Professor William James, also a psychologist and philosopher of Harvard. Every word that he writes seems to be part of his intense and eager personality, and it is sad to think that his humour and joy in philosophic heresies have ceased for us. In his *Varieties of Religious Experience* he explains that he has said nothing in his lectures about the belief in immortality, since it seemed to him a secondary point. "If our ideals are only cared for in eternity, I do not see why we might not be willing to leave them in other hands than ours; yet I sympathise with the urgent impulse to be present ourselves," etc. He "leaves facts to decide." Facts, he thinks, are yet lacking to prove that spirits return.[1]

He does, however, insist that "beyond each man and in a fashion continuous with him there exists a larger power which is friendly to him and his ideals."[2] He believes in what he calls "another dimension of existence," and refers frequently to the curious expansion of consciousness that we seem to get through the administration of an anæsthetic. Yet, as against this, we must remember that the patient only retains consciousness in proportion as

[1] *Varieties of Religious Experience*, by Professor William James, p. 524.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 525.

the anæsthetist gives him oxygen; and we have only to turn to a little book by Oliver Wendell Holmes, entitled *Mechanism in Thought and Morals*, to find a very different point of view :—

> I once inhaled a pretty full dose of ether, with the determination to put on record, at the earliest moment of regaining consciousness, the thought I should find uppermost in my mind. The mighty music of the triumphal march into nothingness reverberated through my brain.....The veil of eternity was lifted.....Henceforth all was clear; a few words had lifted my intelligence to the level of the knowledge of the cherubim. As my natural condition returned, I remembered my resolution; and, staggering to my desk, I wrote.....the all-embracing truth still glimmering in my consciousness. The words were these (children may smile; the wise will ponder):—"A strong smell of turpentine prevails throughout."

Before dealing with James's lecture on Human Immortality, I think it necessary to state how the relation of the brain and consciousness appears to me. I do not wish to assert dogmatically that thought is a function of the brain, although in years to come we may conceivably be able to say this. When the schoolmen wrote that "aquosity" was "the quality of water," they did not think this quality could be explained or produced by oxygen and hydrogen in the familiar formula H_2O. Although I cannot profess to explain what is meant by the word "consciousness," and particularly by the word "self-consciousness," the life of the human being always appears to me like an ordinary household fire, with a scuttle containing a limited quantity of coals. In my analogy what we call vitality corresponds with heat, and what we call consciousness corresponds with flame. When the fire is first lit, there is little to be perceived, either of heat or

flame, which would correspond with the period of infancy; as combustion proceeds we see flame, which means that the gas in the coal has been heated to such a point that it catches fire. It may happen, by a series of untoward accidents, that the coal gets jammed together, and that the flame goes out; this would correspond with premature death. Normally speaking, however, the fire continues to burn as long as it is fed with coal; but when the contents of the scuttle are exhausted the flame ceases, and nothing is left but heat and a non-combustible residue which shortly afterwards becomes a mass of cinders. Now, I do not think that this analogy necessitates the assertion that the coal-gas and the heat are the *only possible causes* of the flame. I have no means of knowing whether or not a flame of this kind might not come into being on another planet under quite different conditions. The fact that the flame co-exists with the combination of coal and heat is (let us suppose) simply a case of concomitant variations. I know that these phenomena co-exist; but I do not know that this kind of flame might not conceivably exist without coal and heat, or that coal and heat might not co-exist without flame, apart from the atmospheric and other conditions which prevail on this planet. All I do know is that in this world the flame of coal-gas does not exist without such gas and heat.

This explanation is a necessary preliminary to some reasoning with which I am about to deal, and which comes to the front in Professor James's book on *Human Immortality*. In the early part of the book he spends some pages seeking to prove that spiritual life is not absolutely dependent on the

brain. He constructs a hypothesis that the "whole world of natural experience is nothing but a time-mask, shattering or refracting the one infinite thought which is the sole reality, into those millions of streams of finite consciousness known to us as our private selves." And he quotes, by way of illustration, Shelley's lines :—

> Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass,
> Stains the white radiance of eternity.

James develops this thesis in a very interesting way, but he does not make it at all clear what all this has to do with *personal* immortality. He writes :—

> And when finally a brain stops acting altogether, or decays, that special stream of consciousness which it subserved will vanish entirely from this natural world. But the sphere of being that supplied the consciousness would still be intact; and in that more real world with which, even while here, it was continuous the consciousness might, in ways unknown to us, continue still.

The rest of the lecture is devoted to the difficulty of presuming personal immortality in the case of animals and all the inhabitants of the earth ever since the existence of pre-historic man, which I think was mainly introduced in order to express once more James's anxiety to make his audience realise that each individual is of infinite importance to himself—a theme which he was always eager to expand. But I cannot help thinking that in his ideas of immortality he was almost entirely in agreement with Fechner (1801–1887), to whose philosophy he devotes an admirable essay in the volume entitled *A Pluralistic Universe* :—

> Fechner likens our individual persons on the earth unto so many sense-organs of the earth's soul. We add to its perceptive life so long as our own life lasts. It

absorbs our perceptions, just as they occur, into its larger sphere of knowledge, and combines them with the other data there. When one of us dies, it is as if an eye of the world were closed, for all perceptive contributions from that particular quarter cease. But the memories and conceptual relations that have spun themselves round the perceptions of that person, remain in the larger earth-life as distinct as ever, and form new relations, and grow and develop throughout all the future, in the same way in which our own distinct objects of thought, once stored in memory, form new relations and develop throughout our whole finite life. This is Fechner's theory of immortality, first published in the little *Buechlein des lebens nach dem tode*, in 1836, and re-edited in greatly improved shape in the last volume of his *Zendavesta*.[1]

In his *Conclusions*, James inclines to a

belief in some form of superhuman life, with which we may, unknown to ourselves, be co-conscious. We may be in the universe as dogs and cats are in our libraries, seeing the books and hearing the conversation, but having no inkling of the meaning of it all.[2]

I now come to Dr. McTaggart, an interesting Cambridge philosopher, who does not offer any arguments in support of the positive assertion that men are immortal, although he believes that such arguments exist, and would justify a belief in our immortality. In his chapter on the subject contained in the volume entitled *Some Dogmas of Religion*, he merely deals with "some" arguments against immortality which he considers invalid. One of his analogies is very striking. For instance, he writes in regard to the self and the body:—

If a man is shut up in a house, the transparency of the windows is the essential condition of his seeing the

[1] *A Pluralistic Universe*, by William James, pp. 170–71. I have quoted only a small part of a deeply interesting passage.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 309.

> sky. But it would not be prudent to infer that, if he walked out of the house, he could not see the sky, because there was no longer any glass through which he might see it.[1]

He admits, however, that, even though the death of the body is no argument for the destruction of the self, and the self cannot be decomposed into its parts, it is still possible that the self should not be immortal. Dr. McTaggart supports his arguments by a chapter on the pre-existence of the soul coupled with a doctrine of plurality of lives. He brings forward many facts which, to his mind, necessitate a theory of pre-existence, although he admits that such immortality as he conceives does not involve the continuity of memory. He does not indicate when the plurality of lives is to end. It may be, he writes,

> that the change, the struggle, and the recurrence of death are endless; or, again, it may be that the process will eventually destroy itself, and merge in a perfection which transcends all time and change. Such an end may come, perhaps, but at any rate it cannot be near.[2]

He derives what seems to me a queer satisfaction from reflecting that death is not a haven of rest, but a starting-point for fresh labours. He wants to unite all sorts of experiences, although there is no prospect of comparing them by the process of memory, which ceases with each existence. His theory is an ingenious exercise in philosophic thought, but it does not prove immortality. Even if it did, I should personally prefer annihilation, since I cannot share the exuberant optimism that makes the idea of continuous existences, with all their dangers, difficulties, and possible tortures, so palatable to Dr. McTaggart.

[1] *Some Dogmas of Religion*, by Dr. McTaggart, p. 105.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 138.

Some reference should be made to a little book of Mr. G. Lowes Dickinson entitled *Religion and Immortality*. Mr. Dickinson's conclusion comes to little more than his statement that "it is mere dogmatism to assert that we do not survive death, and mere prejudice or inertia to assert that it is impossible to discover whether we do or not."[1]

Mr. Dickinson seems to rely more than most people on the probable success of the Society for Psychical Research in obtaining proofs of survival; but that is a matter with which I shall deal in a later chapter. His principal motive in desiring personal immortality is that no one in this life attains his ideal; no one's potentiality is fully realised. It is difficult to imagine the kind of future life that would be suitable for everyone to realise his ideal. As Haeckel has pointed out in his *Riddle of the Universe*, the American Indian wants to have the finest hunting-grounds; the Esquimo looks forward to an inexhaustible supply of bears, seals, and other polar animals; the Mahommedan Arab expects to find lovely maidens coupled with an inexhaustible capacity for the enjoyment of them; the Catholic fisherman of Sicily looks forward to a daily superabundance of the most valuable fishes, and eternal absolution for all his sins—which he can then go on committing in his eternal home. I feel that Mr. Dickinson and his intellectual friends might wish to be rather rigidly secluded from some of the persons here mentioned, as well as from very saintly bores, if his ideal were to be realised in all its perfection.

I cannot end this chapter without some reference

[1] *Religion and Immortality*, by G. Lowes Dickinson, p. 78.

to the theological position of the Christian doctrine of immortality, which has been practically abandoned everywhere except in the Catholic Church. In the early nineties I once heard what may be called a "hell-fire" sermon in an Anglican church, but this was in a remote village, and the whole performance was in the nature of a survival. I do not believe that such sermons are any longer preached in any non-Catholic place of worship, with the possible exception of some obscure conventicles in the wilds of Scotland or Wales. Yet the doctrine of hell is essential to the ascendancy of the Christian churches. The only person outside the Catholic Church who seems to be still aware of the danger entailed by the surrender of hell is the Dean of St. Paul's, who recently told the world that there was "not enough fear in modern religion." The horrors of hell are extensively impressed by Catholic manuals on Catholics from their earliest childhood. The anxiety to preserve the doctrine of hell is particularly conspicuous in a most able little treatise on Psychology in the Stonyhurst series written by Father Michael Maher, S.J. In his opening chapter on the immortality of the soul Father Maher accuses Lucretius and his modern disciples of being anxious to "relieve men from anxiety regarding their condition after death," and therefore to do away with any scheme of future rewards and punishments, without which, Father Maher considers, all human morality would be a mockery.

Father Maher leads up to his thesis of immortality by some subtle chapters on the substantiality and simplicity of the soul, and the spirituality of it. He insists very strongly on the unity of

consciousness, although, if one closely examines that doctrine, the unity is more apparent than real. A man's memory only begins, properly speaking, with adolescence, and even then it is very faint. He is constantly unable to recollect something which he wishes to recollect, and has to wait on the chance of the brain suddenly throwing up what he wants from a great mass of what we call unconscious cerebration below. His memory, and in fact all his consciousness as we know it, are entirely at the mercy of drugs and anæsthetics and a proper supply of food. As Mr. Bertrand Russell writes :—

> The question whether we are also acquainted with our bare selves as opposed to particular thoughts and feelings, is a very difficult one, upon which it would be very rash to speak positively. When we try to look into ourselves we always seem to come upon some particular thought or feeling, and not upon the "I" which has the thought or feeling.....Although acquaintance with ourselves seems probably to occur, it is not wise to assert that it does undoubtedly occur.[1]

Father Maher is also highly satirical about Professor Clifford's Mind-stuff and all monistic theories. He particularly insists that monists must agree with materialists that "mental states cannot act upon the body." Now, it is quite true that although we can see a physical equivalent in molecular changes of the brain in the case of a message through the nervous system to the brain and from, *e.g.*, a motor centre downwards, it is far more difficult to imagine a physical equivalent where a man receives, for example, the news of some disaster and is physically affected by it. In such a case it is of course true that what for want

[1] *Problems of Philosophy*, pp. 78 and 80.

of a more precise word we call "mind," affects the body; but I cannot see that this is in the least inconsistent with my simile of the household fire. One may conceivably say that the flame is produced by the coal and the heat, but it is equally legitimate to say that the flame, when once started, ignites coal-gas which, but for the flame, would not have been ignited. The action of what we call "mind" and body is reciprocal. Mind represents what I feel when myself conscious, and the physical equivalent is what I see of another person's consciousness; but I shall deal more fully with this in the next chapter.

Father Maher is compelled to assume that the soul is in each case specially created by God, and can be annihilated only by God. But he cannot bridge the difficulty of the Darwinian theory without also postulating the creation of a particular soul at some date unknown to man. According to him, God specially intervened in this way at some period after the monkey had developed into man. He falls back also on a number of other props, and is not satisfied with purely psychological proofs. For example, he draws one proof from the moral law and sanctity and justice of God. If there is no retributory state, "then the moral life of man, the seemingly grandest and sublimest reality in the universe, is founded on an irrational hallucination, and many of the noblest acts that have ever been achieved, and which all mankind conspire to applaud, are simply unspeakable folly."[1]

In fact, he quite ignores the contention that morality is of a higher type when it is not based

[1] *Psychology*, by Michael Maher, S.J., p. 491.

on rewards and punishments. He also falls back on a proof from the universal judgment of mankind, with which we may couple another contention that there is also an universal desire of mankind for perfect happiness—which, he says, is impossible unless the life of the human soul be continued after death. In regard to this I need only ask the reader of this book whether, after reading it, he is persuaded that all men can be considered to agree in a desire for personal immortality, or as to what kind of immortality they want. As Haeckel has pointed out :—

> The belief in immortality is not found in Buddhism, the religion that dominates thirty per cent. of the entire human race ; it is not found in the ancient popular religion of the Chinese, nor in the reformed religion of Confucius which succeeded it ; and, what is still more significant, it is not found in the earlier and purer religion of the Jews.[1]

I omit all reference to savage races owing to the uncertainty that must attend all investigation in regard to it. But my first chapter at any rate makes it clear that the Animistic belief in immortality includes every possible variety of opinion.[2]

Father Maher refers to, and deals with, certain objections to the belief. It has been suggested that the souls of the wicked might perish because they are unworthy to exist. To this he replies : "As for the souls of the wicked, they can continue for all eternity to glorify by their punishment the offended majesty and justice of God." He deals with Büchner's suggestion that a disembodied spirit cannot be pictured by the imagination any

[1] *Riddle of the Universe*, p. 199.
[2] Even more varieties can be found in Professor Frazer's recently published book *The Belief in Immortality*.

more than bodiless electricity. He dissociates electricity from consciousness because "electricity is disclosed to us only through sensible movements," while we have an "immediate consciousness" of the simple nature of mental energy. Yet it is also true that mental energy is, from another point of view, apparent to us through sensible movements. He then deals with the objection of Lucretius that the soul is born with the body; it grows and decays with the body, and therefore it perishes with the body. Father Maher remarks that the mind is often powerful and active in the very old; and at times, in spite of dreadful havoc from bodily disease, intelligence may survive in brilliant force to the last. It seems to me, however, that the occasional flicker of intelligence right up to the last moment does not disprove the main contention that consciousness grows and decays with the body. Very often the flame in a fire flickers up in a most remarkable manner before extinction, and this phenomenon would seem to be accidental. I shall have more to say on this point in my next chapter.

It is remarkable that Father Maher, after all these arguments, should, on the last page of his book (page 500), assert that "we are bound to infer that the animal soul is essentially dependent on the material organism and inseparable from it; it is consequently incapable of life apart from the body, and it perishes with the destruction of the body." No animal, therefore, can be conscious.

In the light of what we know in regard to evolution of mind and the unquestionable gradations from animal to human psychology, with which I shall fully deal in the next chapter, it is clear that Father Maher cannot demonstrate the immortality of the

human soul without an act of special creation taking place at a particular moment unknown to us, when our last simian ancestor became our first human ancestor. I think that most non-Catholics will agree that this is rather a flimsy basis for the belief. I am not, of course, arguing that anyone can dogmatically deny the doctrine of personal immortality, although I think it equally impossible for anyone dogmatically to assert it. What I do feel is that there is a strong presumption against the belief in personal immortality ; and, apart from some belief in Christianity or theism, I fail to see that there can be any strong presumption for it.

Chapter V.

THE BEARING OF SCIENCE

The laws connecting consciousness with changes in the brain are very definite and precise, and their necessary consequences are not to be evaded.....Consciousness is a complex thing made up of elements—a stream of feelings. The action of the brain is also a complex thing made up of elements—a stream of nerve-messages. For every feeling in consciousness there is at the same time a nerve-message in the brain.....Consciousness is not a simple thing, but a complex; it is the combination of feelings into a stream. It exists at the same time with the combination of nerve-messages into a stream. If individual feeling always goes with individual nerve-message, if combination or stream of feeling always goes with stream of nerve-messages, does it not follow that, when the stream of nerve-messages is broken up, this stream of feelings will be broken up also, and will no longer form consciousness? Does it not follow that, when the messages themselves are broken up, the individual feelings will be resolved into still simpler elements?

—W. K. Clifford.[1]

The bearing of modern science on the subject of personal immortality is inseparably connected with the problem of consciousness. This subject is naturally one of extreme obscurity, since, as Haeckel points out,

> The only source of our knowledge of consciousness is that faculty itself.....subject and object are one and the same in it; the perceptive subject mirrors itself in its own inner nature which is to be the object of our inquiry;

[1] Professor Clifford's *Lectures and Essays*, Vol. I, pp. 247-49.

> thus we can never have a complete objective certainty of the consciousness of others; we can only proceed by a comparison of their psychic condition with our own.

There are, of course, three different explanations of consciousness.

The first hypothesis is that thought or spirit, in the sense of some immaterial influence, uses the brain as a man plays the piano, and *causes* all mental operations. This theory is impossible to reconcile with the chain of physical causation as we know it in the operations of the brain, of which I shall say more later on. As Romanes points out, "The mind of man would keep breaking in as an independent and miraculous cause were this theory true."[1]

Leibnitz reconciled this difficulty by his doctrine of pre-established harmony; but if we fall back on this, it is immaterial whether we believe in spiritualism or materialism.[2] It must be obvious that, from a certain point of view, the mind depends on the brain. Thus:—

> A man becomes blind or deaf if special parts of the brain are destroyed by hemorrhage; his intelligence is disintegrated if he suffers from paralysis of the brain; a blow on the head may induce a state of fainting in which all mental life disappears; and chemical substances introduced into the blood circulation of the brain change our moods and emotions.....The mental life of animals shows itself to be parallel in its development to the differentiation of the nervous system; the faculties of human individuals appear to correspond to a full development of the brain, the mental life of the idiot to belong to a brain of inhibited growth.[3]

[1] Romanes, *Mind and Motion and Monism*, p. 51.

[2] I have used the term "spiritualism" because it is difficult to find any other; but I, of course, do not wish to confound people who hold these views with the more credulous type of person commonly called "spiritualist."

[3] *Psychology and Physiology*, by Professor Munsterberg, p. 41.

Anyone who has seen a friend go mad and has constantly been in his company afterwards, must often wonder where his friend's soul has gone, if such a thing exists. We are, of course, told that the soul cannot communicate through an imperfect instrument, and that there is what, in telephonic language, is called "a fault on the line." But, in the face of all this alleged spiritual independence of the brain, it is not unreasonable to ask why the soul is not independent *here* and *now*. If, to pursue my former analogy, it cannot communicate through the telephone, why cannot it write a letter or communicate in some other manner? A letter is, in fact, impossible if the brain is not working; but it is not for me to know how a spirit can communicate by extra-cerebral means. The analogy suggests that cerebral communication might be supplemented in the same way as telephonic communication, if the spirit uses the brain only as an instrument. Such considerations clearly show that the burden of proof in regard to the theory lies on those who propound it, apart from the pretensions of revealed religion.

The second hypothesis is that of pure parallelism, and is perhaps best expounded by Romanes in his book on *Monism*:—

> In an Edison lamp the light which is emitted from the burner may be said indifferently to be caused by the number of vibrations per second going on in the carbon, or by the temperature of the carbon; for this rate of vibration could not take place in the carbon without constituting that degree of temperature which affects our eyes as luminous. Similarly, a train of thought may be said indifferently to be caused by brain action or by mind action; for, *ex hypothesi*, the one could not take place without the other. Now, when we contemplate the phenomena of volition by themselves, it is as though

> we were contemplating the phenomena of light by themselves: volition is produced by mind in brain, just as light is produced by temperature in carbon. And just as we may correctly speak of light as the cause, say, of a photograph, so we may correctly speak of volition as the cause of bodily movement. That particular kind of physical activity which takes place in the carbon could not take place without the light which causes a photograph; and similarly that particular kind of physical activity which takes place in the brain could not take place without the volition which causes a bodily movement. So that volition is as truly a cause of bodily movement as is the physical activity of the brain; seeing that, in an absolute sense, the cause is one and the same.[1]

Romanes finally develops this theory into an assertion that *volition* is the "cause of everything," and that the psychic factor is in every case the deciding factor. Nevertheless, he agrees that mind is "nothing but matter in motion."

I now come to the third hypothesis of Materialistic Monism, or what is often called Materialism. A passage in Herbert Spencer leads up to Haeckel's theory of what is now called Materialistic Monism, the founder of which was Spinoza. Herbert Spencer writes:—

> The law of metamorphosis, which holds among the physical forces, holds equally between them and the mental forces. How this metamorphosis takes place; how a force existing as motion, heat, or light can become a mode of consciousness; how it is possible for aerial vibrations to generate the sensation we call sound, or for the forces liberated by chemical changes in the brain to give rise to emotion—these are mysteries which it is impossible to fathom. But they are not profounder mysteries than the transformations of the physical forces into each other.[2]

Haeckel postulates a "substance" in the universe

[1] Romanes, *Mind and Motion and Monism*, pp. 29–30.
[2] *First Principles* (Herbert Spencer, 2nd ed. p. 217).

which he calls Ether. Mind becomes, according to his theory, a form of ether dependent upon matter. This theory will perhaps become clearer if I quote Mr. McCabe's admirable description of the brain in his *Evolution of Mind* :—

> Of these astounding arsenals of energy, the atoms, we have, on the lowest computation, at least 600 million billion in the cortex of the human brain. The atoms are built in an unknown fashion into molecules, the molecules are built up in an equally mysterious way into cells (possibly through intermediate clusters), and the cells are knit into the framework of the tissue in a way that still baffles us at many essential points. And the whole fabric is pervaded and held together by the cosmic fluid, of which each millimetre has "the equivalent of a thousand tons, and an energy equal to the output of a million horse-power station for forty million years." In the face of this great mystery and impressive potentiality, it is, as yet, idle to speculate what the human brain may or may not be capable of doing.....The declaration of Tyndall, so frequently applauded and repeated, that we will never know mind from a knowledge of the brain, is sheer dogmatism.....Until we have penetrated some distance at least into the profound obscurity of the brain's structure and chemistry, we must avoid all such dogmatism on either side.....At present it is a dark cavern, in which the lamps of the anatomist and physiologist do little more than increase our sense of mystery.....It is useless to say that it is or is not capable of any particular function as long as its structure is so scantily known. Nor can we set the processes of brain and mind in antithesis on the ground that they are of different orders—that one set is quantitative and the other qualitative. Many qualitative processes have turned out to be quantitative, or it is at least an open question ; and to speak of different orders is to adopt a metaphysical device which has been often discredited.[1]

For the purposes of my argument it seems to me

[1] *Evolution of Mind*, by J. McCabe, pp. 15-16.

to make no difference whether I postulate ether as the basis of mind under these conditions, or whether I postulate consciousness as the direct product of the brain itself. Haeckel demonstrates, in his *Riddle of the Universe*, that comparative physiology shows the various elementary states of consciousness to be the same in the higher placentals as in man, and that there is the same re-action to external stimuli, such as alcohol, chloroform, etc., in the higher animals as in man. He thinks that, on the whole, the centralisation of the nervous system is the condition of consciousness. This is wanting in the lower classes of animals, but is present in man and in the higher classes of animals.[1] He asks, very pertinently, how certain beverages and drugs could affect the brain as they do if consciousness were an immaterial entity, independent of anatomical organs. And what becomes of the consciousness of the immortal soul when it no longer has the use of those organs?

My own belief is that, in time to come, thought will turn out to be a function of the brain, whether mental activities are connected with ether or not. I need not repeat how ignorant we are of the highly complicated structure of the brain. But the hypothesis seems to me as probable as the hypothesis that organic life is perpetually generated from inorganic substances in the manner suggested by Dr. Bastian. As scientific discoveries progress, the spiritualist philosopher only leads his followers in the direction indicated by the old phrase, *obscurum per obscurius*. The spirit theory is always being driven into a remoter, but gradually more limited,

[1] *Riddle of the Universe*, p. 179.

area, and the spirit may ultimately turn out to have no existence at all. As Professor Munsterberg concisely puts it :—

> The philosopher who bases the hope of immortality on a theory of brain functions, and relies on the facts which cannot be physiologically explained, stands.....on the same ground with the astronomer who seeks with his telescope for a place in the universe where no space exists, and where there would be thus undisturbed room for God and the eternal bodiless souls.[1]

I will now deal with some of the commoner objections to this theory. These objections are made with a view to proving the theory not improbable, but impossible.

The first objection is that the doctrine of the conservation of energy would lead us to suppose that on the death of the body something would remain to represent the mind. I have often made wills for men and women a very short time before death, and have been much impressed with the extraordinary vigour of the mind and the personality at such a moment. It seems odd to reflect that, although there will be an absolute chemical equivalent for a human body if cremated, there will be no equivalent known to us in respect of human consciousness. The answer is, of course, that the effects of consciousness persist in the memory of others, and sometimes in written or printed matter, long after the death of the person, though, of course, by no means for ever. Presumably a day will come when even Homer, Shakespeare, and Plato will be forgotten as individual influences ; and even now we may read their works in a sense which they would repudiate if they were

[1] *Psychology and Physiology*, p. 91.

alive. The thoughts of lesser men are generally merged in the main stream of thought within at least fifty years after death. Yet the consciousness of every person is directly part of the succeeding generation's psychic life. Nevertheless, the doctrine of the conservation of energy is not strictly or literally applicable. Energy is not an entity apart from matter; it is the expression of a relation which exists between some particles of matter and others. Such particles retain potential energy whether decomposed or not.

The second objection is the assertion of a difference in kind, as opposed to a difference in degree, between mind and matter. I need only refer back to the passage I have quoted from Mr. McCabe (p. 76) in regard to the alleged qualitative processes of mind and quantitative processes of matter. Arguments of this kind are usually based on some comparison between what is *ex hypothesi* a highly elaborated form of matter like brain, and an extremely crude kind of matter such as a coffee-pot. Yet no such arguments disprove the possibility that the physical phenomena of highly elaborated matter may make up what we call the brain and its activities.

The third objection is that of Idealist philosophers, that we can know nothing real but our mental states. This objection is really little more than a quibble. If it is true, we cannot possibly recognise the existence of this planet before mind was evolved on it. I admit that we cannot conceive of the planet having ever existed for us except through the medium of our conception thereof, and therefore of our minds. But this has, to my mind, nothing to do with the question of reality in its

practical sense. An astronomer may say that he cannot see a distant star except through a telescope; but, if he were an Idealist, he would go on to say that the distant star had no "reality," and that the only "reality" in question was the effect of the lense of the telescope on his eye. Our sense-data, or what we perceive through the senses, may occasionally be misleading, just as a lunatic may see odd things through a good telescope, or a sane man may see odd things through a bad telescope; but such mistakes are corrected partly by our individual brains, and ultimately by our collective consciousness. It is conceivable that the whole world may be colour-blind in the light of future optical discoveries, but the world would at least agree in the description of what it saw. I assert that *for all practical purposes we directly perceive reality;* and that, if what we call reality is not real, then it must suffice for us until proved false. Dreams are real for us while we dream, but we prefer to take our experiences when awake as the standard of reality. As Mr. McCabe very well points out, scientific discoveries, and, in fact, all human information, are no more important than fairy-tales, if the Idealist assumption is admitted.

This assumption Professor Case, in his article on "Metaphysics,"[1] correctly asserts to be an assumption without proof. He traces it back to the famous motto of Descartes, *Cogito ergo sum* ("I think, therefore I am"), but Descartes would certainly not accept the deductions of his successors in Idealist philosophy.

The fourth and last objection is what I call the

[1] *Encyclopædia Britannica.*

objection of Automatism. It is said that, if thought is a function of the brain, human beings must be *automata*, and books have been written from time to time to prove that the human being is an *automaton* or a machine. I strongly object to the use of either word, since each word connotes not an organism, but a machine, and in the case of the human being we are dealing with a *self-conscious organism*. The whole difficulty seems to me analogous to the difficulty which the Determinist meets in regard to the freedom of the will. When Dr. Johnson said, "Sir, the will is free, and you know it," he meant that no human being will ever be convinced that *his own* will is not free.

On this point Professor Munsterberg writes:—

> Freedom of will means absence of an outer force or of pathological disturbance in the causation of our actions. We are free, as our actions are not the mere outcome of conditions which lie outside of our organism, but the product of our own motives and their normal connections. All our experiences and thoughts, our inherited disposition and trained habits, our hopes and fears, co-operate in our consciousness and in its physiological substratum, our brain, to bring about the action.[1]

Under such conditions I, of course, feel that my will is free; but that by no means implies that I am in any sense unconditioned. I am the product of heredity in the first place, and in the second place I am the *resultant* of my own hereditary disposition and my environment all through life. As I grow older this resultant becomes what is called my character, and this is, no doubt, a very efficient cause in determining what motives will or will not appeal to me. But the fact remains that

[1] *Psychology and Physiology*, p. 7.

neither I nor anyone else can act without a motive or a predominant motive. Therefore, though my will *seems* free and even unconditioned to myself, I know that this is not the case, because I know that there is no effect without a cause, and because I perceive that other human beings are conditioned. If I am trying to sell a house to a man who wants it, I know that if I offer a low enough price he will pay it. I have only to supply an adequate motive, and his action is determined in advance. Yet I do not admit that either he or I can be called an "automaton" in the sense in which that word is generally used.

Similarly, I know my own consciousness, but I cannot know any other person's consciousness except objectively in its physical equivalent. A vivisector might conceivably enable me to observe the molecular changes in the brain of a woman giving birth to a child; but no power on earth will enable me to know exactly what that woman is feeling. As Professor Munsterberg writes: "No molecule moves in the world which cannot be an object for everyone, and no sensation arises in consciousness which can be shared in a second subject."[1]

The human being is as much or as little automatic as a jelly-fish; his power of self-orientation is, of course, far greater, because he can move and reflect; but to me this is a difference in degree, and not a difference in kind. Our human vocabulary is at present most inadequate for discussing problems of this kind, but I may perhaps convey what I mean when I say that I feel my will to be *spontaneous*

[1] *Psychology and Physiology*, p. 47.

but not free. Nor do I feel this position incompatible with the hypothesis that the operations of the mind are conditioned by an unbroken chain of physical causes. This position is very clearly expressed by Professor Huxley, who writes :—

> All states of consciousness in brutes as in men are immediately caused by molecular changes of the brain substance. It seems to me that in men as in brutes there is no proof that any state of consciousness is the cause of change in the motion of the matter of the organism. The feeling we call volition is not the cause of a voluntary act, but the symbol of that state of the brain which is the immediate cause of that act.[1]

In a recent number of the *Hibbert Journal*[2] Professor Harris criticises Huxley as follows :—

> Professor Huxley's view involves the strained position that the sight of an object can cause the emotion of shame, but that the emotion does not cause the subsequent dilatation of the blood vessels which, physiologically speaking, constitutes the blush.

To my mind, Professor Huxley's view involves nothing more than that the sight of an object can cause the *physical basis* of the emotion of shame.

I will take a more complicated example which, at first sight, seems more difficult. If I receive a blackmailing letter with a demand for an immediate payment of £1,000, where is the physical equivalent along the whole chain of mental process ? The action of my brain as I read the letter and decide what to do *seems* as far removed from the category of physical causation as anything well can be. Yet all that happens is that I, by the physical processes of the optic nerve, read written characters which at once rouse associations of a highly disagreeable

[1] T. H. Huxley, *Collected Essays*, Vol. I, "Method and Results" (1898), p. 240.
[2] January, 1913.

kind, and which start a kind of nerve-storm in the brain. Where do I find, at first sight, the chain of physical causation between what I am writing now and the effect on the person who reads it? I cannot do better than quote Munsterberg, who writes on this point:—

> But again we consider the psychical effects which we produce in others as intermediated by physical processes. We stimulate the optic and acoustic and tactual nerves of others with the purpose of reaching their central nervous system, and of producing there the ideas with which we started. These ideas must then work for themselves; they stir up their associations and awaken their inhibitions, but the outsider cannot do anything further. He can only communicate the ideas, and let them work in the receiver from a psychological point of view; that is all the influence we have on our fellow men.[1]

On these grounds I maintain that consciousness may well turn out in the future to be nothing but the *inward personal experience* of certain molecular changes in the brain which account for all that we know as consciousness. The fact of consciousness is not easy to grasp, but the difficulty of fitting the personal element of consciousness into the impersonal element of detached observation is of itself no proof that consciousness is causative or immortal. I hope to have at least demonstrated that in any case consciousness, even as we now know it in human beings, can scarcely be conceived as existing apart from the brain and the nervous system.

I will now give some particular instances showing that the evolution of mind can be traced almost as exactly and precisely as the evolution of matter,

[1] *Psychology and Physiology*, pp. 238 and 239.

and that there is no difference except of degree between the beginnings of consciousness in the lower organisms and its culmination in the human being.

Mr. McCabe thinks that

> Such mind as is discoverable in the lowest animals is found equally well in the plants, and is strongly developed in certain points in the more advanced plants. In both plant and animal at that remote level there is sensitiveness to stimuli and spontaneous or self-initiated movement.....These constitute all that we mean by mind in the lowest animals.....Whatever this elementary psychic quality is, therefore, it is a common property of living plasm, not an exclusive possession of the living animal.....The real distinction between plant and animal is related.....to a simple physical difference. The plant has become sessile, rooting itself to the soil; the animal has developed locomotion.[1]

Mr. McCabe therefore finds the first traces of mind "in spontaneous movement and responsive movement to stimulation."

He associates the whole of the phenomena of consciousness with the cortex, and regards it as the "most reprehensible dogmatism to say that consciousness may not have arisen in and be a function of the cortex."[2] He observes that "consciousness is emptied of all significance apart from nervous processes. The differences between states of consciousness are wholly due to differences in nerve processes. The faculties or qualities of mind are diverse functions of nerve of which we are conscious."

I will not burden the reader with the numerous experiments in animal psychology which Mr. L. T. Hobhouse so interestingly records in his book

[1] *Evolution of Mind*, by J. McCabe (to which all further references in this chapter relate), pp. 22 and 23.
[2] P. 231.

entitled *Mind in Evolution*. The essential points in this book are very well summarised by Mr. McCabe in his own book. Mr. McCabe accounts for a great deal of what is called intelligence in animals by the explanation of simple or complex associations. In reference to certain anecdotes he continues :—

> But when a dog snaps a piece of bread which it usually disdains because it wants a door opened, or when it drags or calls a stranger to its needy master, or when a cat awakens a household because there is a burglar in the house, we have a different type of association—we have cases of what Dr. Thorndyke calls a loosening of the elements associated, the freeing of ideas ; which he rightly regards as the next direction of progress.[1]

In his chapter entitled "The Dawn of Humanity" Mr. McCabe traces in detail an unbroken series of skulls which join the ape with the man. At the time that he wrote the latest discovery in the chain was the ape-man of Java, whose remains were found in 1892, and represent a type about midway in cerebral development between the anthropoid ape and paleolithic man. Since then equally interesting remains have been discovered in Sussex. He clearly points out that, instead of having to explain "some miraculous and sudden appearance of human faculties, we have merely to suggest how, in the course of half a million or a million years, the anthropoid brain rose to a level below that of the lowest existing savage."[2] On Mr. McCabe's estimate, "we have beyond question more than 600,000 years between the miocene ape and the ape-man, at least 100,000 years from this to the earliest paleolithic man, and at least 100,000 years from paleolithic man to civilisation."[3]

[1] P. 228. [2] P. 253. [3] P. 253.

Mr. McCabe traces a long series of human skulls and jaws which show a slow progressive evolution of human intelligence. "The prognathism is gradually modified, the heavy frontal ridges diminish, the facial index and the cranial capacity continually rise."[1]

The same continuity is traceable in the case of implements all through the Old and New Stone Ages.

Mr. McCabe makes an instructive comparison between the Tasmanians and the highest form of mammal. The Tasmanians have "no tribal organisation and no houses. Though they had fire-sticks, they were never known to use them; fire had to be regularly maintained by them, or borrowed from more advanced people." Unfortunately, the last of the tribe disappeared thirty years ago; but very useful information has been recorded about them. Mr. McCabe finds it "difficult to see anything more than a difference of degree between the ideas of these primitive humans and those of the highest mammals. The animals' general ideas are abstract in so far as they are general. The Tasmanians' ideas were of the same order somewhat more advanced."[2]

Mr. McCabe points out that there is no other ground than abstraction on which man may be sharply divided from the animal world. "If intelligence is a generalised term for the capacities of perception, judgment, and reason, it is at least found in the higher mammals."[3]

I need hardly say that Mr. McCabe proves his

[1] P. 262. [2] P. 248.
[3] P. 250. See particularly the chapter entitled "The Dawn of Humanity."

assertions up to the hilt, but I will not spoil his excellent book by taking further extracts from it.

The evolution of mind not only shows a complete continuity between man and the animals, but it also shows that man *only rises above the animals by reason of his cerebral development.* For details of this cerebral development and its causes I need only refer again to Mr. McCabe's book.

This seems quite inconsistent with the spiritualist theory. Why should intelligence on the level of human intelligence coincide only with the existence of the highly complicated development which is characteristic of the human brain, and even then only in exact proportion to the gradual advance of that development? If the mind is independent of the brain, why should the ape-man or the Tasmanian be regarded as incapable of metaphysical reflection? If we are to follow Professor James in his theory that the "consciousness on the other side of the brain" is strictly limited by its instrument, then I ask, as I asked before, why a mind with such vast faculties should be baulked by one instrument, and be unable to find another?

In these circumstances, who is to say where the genesis of an immortal soul occurs? If we draw it at the possession of the cortex, then we must include any such animals as are in any sense self-conscious. It is significant that no thinker has ventured to draw a line at any definite point, whether it be the Catholic theologians, Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace, or Professor James. Supposing, however, than any of these gentlemen had been spectators of the whole process of evolution, we may imagine that some bold spirit among them might have singled out a particular ape-man, and endowed him

with an immortal soul. Assuming this to have been done, I again ask what any given ape-man or human being would be like deprived of a nervous system, and in an universe of (say) four dimensions? It is the nervous system which undoubtedly distinguishes one person's character from another.

To take a further difficulty, what is to be the age of human beings in a future life? If a baby of three months old is to remain three months old through eternity, such arrest of development seems rather a hardship for the infant. If, on the other hand, we are all to be thirty-five, all individual relations between parents and children and older and younger persons will be hopelessly confounded, and lose almost all similarity to what they were in human life. There are, again, the difficulties in regard to men with three or four wives, and women with three or four husbands. Queen Victoria is alleged to have said that nothing would induce her to meet King David in a future life, because she disapproved so strongly of his morals; but then she also quite logically disapproved of second or third marriages. The only way of solving all these difficulties is to abolish sex altogether. In that case how much would remain of individual identity? Even the characters of old people are strongly influenced by the fact that they have been brought up as belonging to one sex or the other. The differences between a brother and sister are often no more than the differences between a person brought up as a boy and another person brought up as a girl; yet these differences are very striking.

It is scarcely too much to say that we can in these days formulate no hypothesis of a future individuality which can be reconciled with the

presumptions necessitated by modern thought and modern science. Even religious people frankly admit this nowadays, and often confess that the whole matter is a mystery. The whole belief has become absolutely vague and colourless except for the common or garden Spiritualist, who is reviving much the same kind of Animism as I described among savage tribes in the first chapter.

The Spiritualists cater for the type of man who determines to believe in personal immortality whether it is true or not, because he cannot face the prospect of never again seeing the dead whom he has loved in this life. He comes to them, therefore, with a will to believe; and if this will is sufficiently strong they very soon give him material for the will to act upon. Spiritualism and the operations of the Psychical Research Society constitute the answer made to modern science by those who wish to hoist it with its own petard. My next chapter will, therefore, deal with the whole question of psychical research and spiritualism.

Chapter VI.

PSYCHICAL RESEARCH AND SPIRITUALISM

> But does the evidence afford us proof of immortality? Obviously it cannot; nor can any investigations yield scientific proof of that larger, higher, more enduring life which we desire and mean by immortality.....The intelligent and characteristic messages, however, suggest that the vague ones are due to the fading and dissolving of earthly memories and ties, as the departed become more absorbed in their new life, the very nature of which we are in our present state incapable of conceiving. Our own limitations, in fact, make it impossible for the evidence to convey the assurance that we are communicating with what is best and noblest in those who have passed into the unseen.
>
> —Professor Barrett.[1]

The Psychical Research Society represents, to my mind, the one remaining refuge for those who wish to believe in personal immortality. Their proceedings may sometimes be rather tiresome to the outsider—such as endless collections of automatic writings about quotations from Shakespeare and Ovid; but they are marked by the most studious impartiality and intellectual honesty. As an example of this I may refer to the fact that the late Mr. Myers left a letter sealed up in two or three envelopes at his bankers in order to reveal

[1] *Psychical Research*, by Professor Barrett, F.R.S. (Williams and Norgate), pp. 245–46.

the contents through a medium, and that the Society fully acknowledged the failure of the experiment.

I have not been a member of the Psychical Research Society, because I have had various experiences myself which have quite sufficed for my curiosity. Such experiences are to me rather repulsive, and I should not mention them here but for the fact that I cannot trust the evidence of other people unless I can cross-examine them, either as they tell their story, or on the story when written. With myself, on the other hand, I have all the materials that I need for weighing the evidence.

I am not going to deal with such subjects as clairvoyance, but only with such subjects as touch directly upon the question of the survival of individuality beyond the grave. If no individuality persists, and we are merely re-absorbed into some collective force, the subject has lost its interest for me, and, I think, for most other persons.

I propose to deal with the following subjects in the order named :—

1. Planchette.
2. Automatic writing.
3. Telepathy.
4. Apparitions which telepathy cannot explain, such as the presence of ghosts in haunted houses.
5. Spiritualist *séances* and materialisation.

1. PLANCHETTE is an instrument not now so much in vogue as it was. It is a heart-shaped board, supported on two wheels, and a pencil. This instrument is rolled over a piece of paper by two people at opposite ends of it, and some kind of force moves it about so that the pencil forms words

or signs on the paper. Mr. Tuckett explains this phenomenon by a neurotic temperament and a state of auto-suggestion ;[1] but no doubt planchette requires less skill than automatic writing, in which an expert can sometimes write independent messages with both hands at once. In the case of planchette results may also be reached by thought-transference if it is possible between the parties. My only experience of this was in 1902, with a female relation of mine who had lost her daughter about two or three years before. It was clear to me that the planchette was mainly controlled by her, and that some kind of auto-suggestion was going on. Various suggestions were made as to the last subjects which I had discussed with the deceased, but these subjects were not those which would naturally have occurred to me, as I was not particularly interested in the work she was doing, and, so far as I remember, she never talked about it to me. The deceased then introduced on to the scene a young American friend of mine who had been killed in exploring a mountain called Mount Lefroy in the Far West, and of whom my relation had frequently heard. This young man had fallen off the mountain at the age of thirty in the year 1896, and seemed to have made friends with the deceased in the next world. I proceeded to cross-examine him through the intervention of the first spirit, with rather unsatisfying results. I asked him how old he was at the time of his death, and he said thirty-three. On my remarking that he was thirty, the planchette indicated that he was now thirty-three, although he was not thirty-three at that time ! I

[1] *Evidence for the Supernatural*, by Tuckett, pp. 89–90.

then replied that if the years were to be counted at all, he would now be thirty-six, and the planchette indicated signs of displeasure on the part of the young lady. I tried to propitiate her, and indicated that if the young man would tell me the name of the mountain off which he had fallen I might be convinced of his existence, but the planchette only recorded the fact that both spirits had gone away in disgust.

2. AUTOMATIC WRITING. — This phenomenon Mr. Myers classified as a form of motor automatism, but he admitted that the apparent externality of the activity does not prove that messages have not originated in the submerged *strata* of the writer's own mind. Mr. Myers added: "In most cases indeed.....this is what really occurs."[1] It is submitted by Mr. Myers and some of his colleagues, however, that this writing often makes strange revelations of things which would otherwise not be known.

My own view of automatic writing and of what are called cross-correspondences is, that if enough of this writing is manufactured, coincidences are bound to occur, and that these coincidences are as little convincing as the sort of evidence we are offered to induce us to believe that Bacon wrote Shakespeare's plays. Time will show if I am wrong. While putting together the notes for this chapter I tried to see what I could do myself. I shut my eyes and allowed my pen to wander over the paper. The results showed that my mind was not wholly blank, but that odd sentiments, probably due to submerged *strata* of my mind, found expres-

[1] *Human Personality*, by Myers, Vol. I, p. 27.

sion. The sentences ran quite disjointedly, and I realised that if I spent a whole day, instead of ten minutes, writing this kind of thing some curious results might be obtained, but I should find it very difficult to believe that they were of any real importance. Automatic writing has never stood a crucial test such as divining the contents of the letter left by Mr. Myers to which I referred before. When the letter was opened on December 13, 1904, Mrs. Verrall first reported to the meeting the conclusions she had been led to form concerning the envelope from her own automatic script; but when the envelope was opened it was found that there was no resemblance between its actual contents and what was alleged by the script to be contained in it.

3. TELEPATHY.—Most people are by now familiar with what Mr. Myers called "subliminal consciousness"—viz., that there is a large part of the human brain quite unilluminated by what we call consciousness, and that this is a store-house of memories not only personal, but also ancestral. The theory is closely related to what Samuel Butler called "unconscious memory." It is picturesquely described by Mr. Myers in the following passage:—

> For of late years we have realised more and more fully upon how shifting and complex a foundation of ancestral experience each individual life is based. In recapitulation, in summary, in symbol, we re-traverse from the embryo to the corpse the history of life on earth for millions of years. During our self-adaptation to continually wider environment, there may probably have been a continual displacement of the threshold of consciousness, involving the lapse and submergence of much that once floated in the main stream of our being. Our consciousness at any given stage of our evolution is but

> the phosphorescent ripple on an unsounded sea. And, like the ripple, it is not only superficial, but manifold. Our psychical unity is federative and unstable; it has arisen from irregular accretions in the remote past; it consists even now only in the limited collaboration of multiple groups.[1]

Our ignorance of all this region in the brain is so great that we may easily believe that this part of the brain is what is affected by telepathic phenomena; that is to say, either instances of thought-transference between the living, or of thought-transference between the dying and some other living person. Such apparitions at the moment of death are, of course, common, and frequently recorded. Sir Oliver Lodge confesses that he does not understand what telepathy is, although he believes that it exists. It is, of course, possible to surmise that such messages are vibrations in ether; but we do not know; and in any case, as the late Mr. Podmore remarked, we have not been able to produce such phenomena at will, and therefore to make experiments as a chemist can in his laboratory. Mr. Podmore and Mr. Tuckett both take an agnostic view of the subject; but the fact remains that telepathy is at this moment the most efficient obstacle to proving the survival of man. The famous medium, Mrs. Piper, attributes all her effects to thought-transference, and Mr. Podmore wrote: "The trance personalities have never told us anything which was not possibly, scarcely anything which was not probably, within the knowledge of some living person. None of the posthumous letters have been read."[2]

[1] *Human Personality*, Myers, Vol. I, p. 16.

[2] *The Newer Spiritualism*, Podmore, p. 312. Sir Oliver Lodge, however, denies that Mrs. Piper's opinion, even if correctly

This consideration applies even more forcibly to the results of spiritualistic *séances*. Perhaps the best example of a dream containing facts unknown to other persons is a story summarised by Professor Barrett as follows:—

> In February, 1891, an American farmer died suddenly at Dubuque, about a hundred miles from his home. After the inquest at Dubuque, the old clothes which he had been wearing were thrown away, and his son brought home the body. On hearing of her father's death, his daughter fell into a swoon, in which she remained for several hours. When she recovered consciousness, she said: "Where are father's old clothes? He has just appeared to me dressed in a white shirt, black clothes, and satin slippers, and told me that, after leaving home, he sewed a large roll of bills inside his grey shirt with a piece of my red dress, and the money is still there." This description of her father's burial-clothes, which she had not seen, was quite correct, but neither she nor anyone else had known of the pocket or of the money in the shirt. To pacify her, her brother went back to Dubuque, where he found the old clothes were lying in a shed. In the shirt was found a large roll of bills, amounting to thirty-five dollars, sewed with a piece of red cloth exactly like the dress, the stitches being large and irregular, as if made by a man.[1]

Professor Barrett adds that telepathy from living persons might account for accurate knowledge about the unseen burial-garments, but not for her statement about the secreted money, concerning which all the family were ignorant.

A fuller account is given in Mr. Myers's *Human Personality*, where a representative of the Society seems to have cross-examined the young lady.[2] He asked her if she knew of the pocket before her

reported, is of value, as she scarcely ever sees the results of her work.

[1] *Psychical Research*, Prof. Barrett, p. 130.

[2] *Human Personality*, Vol. II, p. 37.

father's death, and she said that she did not; but he did not ask her how her father could cut off a piece of her red dress without the fact coming to her knowledge. It seems to me suspicious that the swoon did not occur until the daughter was told of her father's death—three days afterwards—instead of occurring at the time of the death. Further, in that swoon she may have remembered that her father had taken a piece of her red dress for a pocket, which she had previously forgotten in her conscious moments. If she subconsciously remembered this fact, she would be strongly inclined to wonder if there was any money in it. In any case, I should not be convinced by such a story unless I was able to cross-examine the person who told it.

The general objections to telepathy as a theory are:—

(*a*) The necessity of a training in the weighing of evidence, which is not at all common, and even lawyers are sometimes content with very rough tests.

(*b*) There is often a conscious or unconscious bias, either to prove a theory or to tell a good story, and it is astonishing how a story can grow in the mind.

(*c*) The element of coincidence is very formidable. We all have dreams which are constantly not coming true, and we only record what does come true. This would explain why some persons have perhaps only one or two experiences in a lifetime. Mr. Tuckett records a remarkable coincidence where Mr. Arthur Law wrote a play calling one of his characters Robert Golding and making him the sole survivor of the crew of a ship called the *Caroline*, which had been lost at sea. A few

days after the production of the play Mr. Law read in a newspaper an account of the shipwreck of a vessel named the *Caroline* which had gone down with all hands except a man called Golding.[1]

On the whole, I am inclined to believe in telepathy, in spite of the obvious objections to the theory. But belief in telepathy seems at present to exclude belief in personal immortality.

At this point I think it well to record an experience of my own which I have not been able to explain, and which I did not record at the time, because I rarely write more than three lines for each day in my diary, and I intensely disliked the experience. At the time I did not lay it before the Psychical Research Society, since the suicide involved was carefully concealed by the family of the deceased, and I thought the facts might lead to his identity being known. For the purposes of my story I shall call my friend Jones. Jones was two years younger than myself, but I made friends with him shortly after he came to Balliol, and found him a very interesting companion. He had unfortunately contracted at school a habit of taking drugs, due to attacks of neuralgia, and on one occasion I had come into his rooms in the morning and found him looking half dead in his chair. He came round quite easily, and there was no need to fetch a doctor; but had I ever dreamed of his committing suicide, I should have attached but little weight to such a dream. His health seemed to get much better, and we often walked or cycled together; I should certainly have thought that he had lost all tendency to drug-taking. On April 21, 1899,

[1] *Evidence for the Supernatural*, Ivor Tuckett, p. 120.

most of us came back to the college, but I did not happen to see Jones, who went away the next morning. He left word that he had gone to see an uncle who was very ill in Athens, and as the newspapers mentioned the uncle's illness, I thought no more about him. On the evening of Tuesday, April 25, I spent a good part of the day in the open air and bathed, so my nerves were probably in good trim. In the evening I spoke at a debating society, and went on from there to a concert at my Musical Club somewhere between 8.30 and 9. On arriving at the club I felt a very queer uneasiness, and was unable to sit still and listen to the music, which I usually enjoyed very much. I came away from the club and went round the college seeing various people, but feeling very restless and disturbed in mind for some reason that I did not know. I went to bed about midnight, but could not sleep at first. When I did sleep I woke up three or four times absolutely terrified by a dream in which I saw a person whom I could not identify, but whom, for some reason, I thought to be a male contemporary of my own, lying down in a dim light which enabled me to see nothing but the glint of a revolver barrel and part of a white face. As I did not record this dream in the morning, I cannot be positive whether I saw blood, or whether I merely had an impression that blood might result from the proximity of the revolver barrel to the face. On the preceding Saturday a friend of mine had been unpacking his box, and had jokingly pointed his revolver at me after taking it out of the box. As he was accustomed to shoot rather recklessly at all seasons, I had remonstrated with him for pointing the revolver at me. On the morning after my

dream I met him, and told him the sort of dreams that I had in consequence of his antics with the revolver. I then thought no more about the matter.

On Friday, April 28, I heard that my friend had shot himself at 10 p.m. in a certain hotel at Dijon on that Tuesday night, and had died very shortly afterwards. He had shot himself in the temple (I cannot remember whether it was the left or the right), and that was all that I heard at the time. On hearing this I was very much impressed that I had not identified him in my dream, since, as I said before, I should have attached little importance to such a dream about him, having regard to previous events. It did not, however, occur to me to think that my dream had any relation to the actual scene of the tragedy. I merely regarded it as resembling an imperfectly sensitised photograph, if, indeed, it were telepathic, and not a simple coincidence. In August, 1900, I was passing through Dijon for the first time, and I went to the hotel where the death had occurred, and where everyone well remembered the occurrence. The waiter who had served dinner to my friend told me that he had come in about seven o'clock and ordered a bottle of sparkling wine, which he drank with his dinner and seemed to enjoy. After that he retired to the smoking room—which the waiter showed me—and wrote a number of letters to friends and posted them outside. (I may here add that he did not write to me, and that the Master of Balliol showed me a letter which he had written to him among others at that time.) When the waiter showed me the smoking room he said: "I will explain how he died; he lay down on the parquet floor after turning out the

electric light": and, as the waiter turned out the light, I saw what I instantly recognised to be the same light that I had seen in my dream. There was a lamp in the street immediately outside the room from which came just enough light for me to have been able to see what I did.

I cannot explain this experience except either by an odd series of coincidences, or by a picture in my friend's mind of himself at the moment before death, being transmitted to me. As he did not write to me, I have no reason to believe that I was in his thoughts at the time, and I have never had any other experience like it. I dream almost every night of my life; but I never remember dreaming either before or since of suicide, although I have constantly dreamed of deaths and violent deaths.

I may add that for some nights after his death I was accustomed to wake and see him standing in the same clothes that he had always worn, by the fireplace in my bedroom. I was at the top of a high tower, and in life he frequently came up, thinking I had not gone to bed, and sometimes entered my bedroom, when I would wake up and have a talk. After his death the figure used to stand with its back to the fireplace, smoking a cigarette, in a shiny blue overcoat and a bowler hat. I got so much into the habit of waking up and seeing the same apparition that I used to keep Whitaker's Almanack by my chair, and read all the Civil Service salaries until I could look up again and see that the apparition was no longer there.

Since nine-tenths of what we see is seen through the brain, I attribute these appearances to nothing more than the persistence of a cerebral or visual habit.

This brings me to the subject of

4. GHOSTS, which usually fall within this classification.

Old people have constantly told me of hallucinations which they attribute to imperfect vision. I know of an old man who was accustomed to see imaginary troops riding up and down his field, and an old aunt of mine used to say that she frequently saw people she had known in former years wandering about her room. The effect of faulty vision in this respect is very well illustrated in an article by Mr. John Honeyman in the *Proceedings of the Psychical Research Society for January, 1904.* Mr. Tuckett tells an interesting story of how a member of Parliament was convinced that he saw a deceased member walking about in the lobby of the House of Commons after his death, and attributes this to the fact that his informant had been in the habit of seeing the dead man there.

On one occasion I was walking on a dark night near Petersfield. A little way before I came into the town, I passed a new red-brick public-house throwing a strong light on to a side road on the left. As I passed I thought that I saw a crowd of men standing outside in the light, and dressed in early nineteenth century clothes. After walking on for twenty or thirty yards I was struck by the fact that the clothes were not those of the present day, and I walked back to the place, where I found not a soul about. I walked into the public-house and asked if anyone had been walking up and down, but the landlord said that the road was entirely deserted, and that he had no customers in his house. This was, of course, a case of pure

hallucination.[1] The same remarks apply to the sense of hearing. I have on at least one occasion quite clearly heard a near relation's voice since his death in circumstances which pointed to a continuing habit of hearing what I was accustomed to hear when we were together.

The case of haunted houses is, of course, much more difficult to explain. The best theory of these appearances is probably that of Professor Barrett, which is as follows :—

> Other cases might be quoted, which, like the two preceding ones, suggest that some kind of *local imprint* on material structures or places has been left by some past events occurring to certain persons, who, when on earth, lived or were closely connected with that particular locality ; an echo or phantom of these events becoming perceptible to those now living who happen to be endowed with some special psychic sensitiveness. Although this theory seems extravagant and incredible, there are not wanting analogies to it both in the domain of physics and psychical research. A coin left on a pane of glass, and after some time removed, leaves a local imprint which may be revealed by breathing on the glass ; pieces of wood, coal, and many other materials laid on a photographic plate, and then removed, leave a "local imprint," so that the very structure of the materials is revealed when the plate is developed, it may be long after. The causes of these and other curious phenomena are now known, but this cannot be said of some analogous phenomena in psychical research.[2]

In many cases also the apparition may have originated in an optical delusion, and the tradition of it been subsequently transmitted by telepathy.

5. SPIRITUALISTIC SÉANCES AND MATERIALISATION.—Such phenomena as spiritualistic *séances*

[1] *Cf.* instances given by Mr. Tuckett in his *Evidence for the Supernatural*, p. 95.
[2] *Psychical Research*, W. F. Barrett, pp. 197–98.

and materialisation have fallen into much disrepute owing to the fraud practised by such mediums as Slade and Home. Messrs. Maskelyne and Devant have succeeded in duplicating almost every phenomenon that has ever been seen at *séances*, yet Mr. Tuckett gives an instance of a professional conjurer in Berlin who declared, in 1877, that he could not explain the phenomena associated with a medium by conjuring, although this medium had been exposed by Sir E. Ray Lankester. The fraud of some mediums does not necessarily invalidate all that they have done, but it certainly is very odd that everything at these proceedings has to be done in darkness or dim light, while the medium appears to wander about in a mask, on the distinct understanding that all the persons round the table are not to leave go of each other's hands. Why, again, should the mediums have to retire persistently into cabinets behind curtains? In some cases they seem to prove too much. Thus Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace relates that he has been able to touch the ears of a female spirit in order to ascertain that the ears had not been pierced for ear-rings. Dr. Wallace, however, has a faith that may be said to move mountains. For example, he writes:—

> I cannot remember a single instance in which a confederate has been secured by seizure, though cases have occurred in which the seizure of the spirit-form has resulted in the seizure of the medium; which is not remarkable if we remember the amount of evidence showing that these forms originate from the body of the medium, and either visibly or invisibly return to it.[1]

Dr. Wallace does, indeed, record one very interesting daylight experience; but this is almost

[1] *My Life*, by Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace, Vol. II, p. 341.

obviously due to the medium being able to hypnotise the persons present.[1]

He mentions instances of family names being discovered by mediums in very odd circumstances;[2] but Mr. Podmore pointed out that there is an elaborate organisation among mediums for obtaining and interchanging information among all the members of the guild, and most people who consult mediums consult more than one.[3]

Dr. Wallace mentions how a medium was able to write on paper placed between a folding slate; but it is significant that the folding slate had to be placed upon the floor a foot or two away from the table, while the party conversed for a few minutes.[4] This phenomenon is explained in Appendix E to Mr. Tuckett's book, and Appendix F also explains spirit-rapping.[5]

As for what is called Materialisation, I need only refer to Mr. Tuckett's comments on the interview with Professor Richet.[6]

It seems impossible that *séances* conducted on the old lines can possibly prove anything. Only a professional conjurer can really test what goes on, and even professional conjurers are not infallible.

Even if we exclude the question of thought-transference, which Mrs. Piper was alleged to admit would explain her own experiments, there seems no reason why there should not be telepathic communication from persons who survive death with ordinary human beings, and why such messages should not contain information about *facts*

[1] *My Life*, Vol. II, p. 330. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 347.
[3] *Modern Spiritualism*, Podmore, Vol. II, p. 339, *note*.
[4] *My Life*, Vol. II, p. 347.
[5] *Evidence for the Supernatural*, Tuckett, pp. 278–79.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 93.

previously unknown to all human beings. It seems difficult to understand why such communications should be confined to mediums, since no mediums seem to be required for ordinary telepathic messages.[1]

In this connection Professor Schiller has laid down some interesting rules about Psychical Research in his Essay on Philosophy and a Future Life.[2] He thinks that an inquirer must assume fundamental identity between this world and the other, and a psychological continuity between men in this world and men in the other. He assumes, however, that men in the other world would not wish to communicate with men in this world. This is not a very reasonable assumption if we remember the various motives that must exist for such communication. The other assumptions may appear reasonable, but they necessarily harmonise with the sort of results we should expect to get through telepathic agency—*i.e.*, results quite consistent with all facts known at present to human beings. It is remarkable that to-day there seems less hope than there was ten or fifteen years ago of obtaining the required evidence of survival. Sir Oliver Lodge admits that he cannot to-day bring any evidence that would convince the Royal Society, although I have reason to know that he hopes for such evidence in the course of at least fifty years. Sir William Crookes admits that, so far as this matter is concerned, he has "come to a brick wall."[3]

[1] It is significant that no medium has been able to guess what letters are in a box when a handful of a cardboard alphabet has been put into the box at random. Yet surely a spirit can see through a box!

[2] Contained in the volume entitled *Humanism*, p. 266.

[3] *Master Workers*, by Harold Begbie, p. 215.

Dr. Bramwell, the famous hypnotist, is firmly convinced that the sub-consciousness which becomes active in the trance, is responsible for all the phenomena which point to the communication or manifestation of spiritual beings.[1]

Mr. Frank Podmore entirely agreed with this view, and emphatically expressed it in the last book that he wrote before his death. Mr. Podmore was for a time shaken from his scepticism by Mrs. Piper; but she, as I said before, may have attributed her trance revelations to thought-transference, and not to spirits; and even if she did not, Mr. Podmore ultimately did.[2]

I know of no leading thinker to-day, except Sir Oliver Lodge, who will not agree with my contention that Psychical Research has, so far, done nothing but extend the region of experimental psychology; and that, while it has raised a strong presumption in favour of what we call telepathic communication between human beings, it raises no presumption whatever for similar communication between human beings and disembodied spirits. As I have written above, no medium has ever stood really crucial tests, such as discovering the contents of Myers's famous letter. Yet, in spite of Professor Schiller's statement, I am convinced that on the hypothesis of survival there must be an enormous desire of the dead to communicate with the living on all kinds of important business matters, to take only one subject.

The story of Swedenborg getting into communication with the husband of a widow, and thereby finding a secret drawer in which the deceased had

[1] *Master Workers*, p. 266. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 261.

put a receipt for a silver service which he had bought from a goldsmith, is most significant. But for the alleged good offices of Swedenborg, the widow might presumably have had to pay the goldsmith money which she did not owe; and instances perpetually occur in the ordinary business of life where the possibility of communicating with a dead person would cut endless knots. I am sure that we should all be most grateful for any scheme that a spiritualist could devise for taking the evidence of deceased persons on commission, or, if possible, in open court.

Professor Barrett suggests in the passage which I have quoted at the top of this chapter, that messages from the dead become fainter and fainter because the departed become more and more absorbed in the new life. The facts can be equally well explained by my own theory, which is that our conviction of the dead being still alive is precisely similar to the conviction of a man who has lost his left leg, that he still has pains in his left big toe. The only difference is that the latter pains seem to continue for a lifetime, whereas our feelings about the dead become less vivid as time goes on.

I do not believe that anyone to-day is really convinced by the results of psychical research up to now, without a strong desire to be convinced; but it is significant that those who really want to be convinced, resort to the spiritualist more than to the priest, and thereby get a "better run for their money."

Chapter VII.

CURRENT ARGUMENTS

Mimnermus in Church

You promise heavens free from strife,
  Pure truth, and perfect change of will;
But sweet, sweet is this human life,
  So sweet, I fain would breathe it still;
Your chilly stars I can forego,
  This warm, kind world is all I know.....
Forsooth the present we must give
  To that which cannot pass away;
All beauteous things for which we live
  By laws of space and time decay.
But oh! the very reason why
  I clasp them is because they die.

—*From "Ionica," by William Cory.*

Before dealing with the current arguments for personal immortality, I must distinguish various motives in contemporary society and sentiment. Dr. Schiller has abundantly shown that most men *do not want* to know about a future life, and are only perturbed about it at very brief intervals, like Mr. Myers's churchwarden, who objected to discussing "eternal bliss" on the ground of its being a "depressing topic." Religion purveys up the belief only as a "temporary anodyne for overwrought feelings," or a "vague, remote guarantee against annihilation, which may be summoned up

or dismissed at pleasure, and does not involve any immediate practical consequences."[1] Consequently religious people frown upon psychical research and all its works.

Men do not like thinking about death any more than Dame Quickly thought that Falstaff would like thinking about God. All their life-long habits would be upset if they were certain about a future life. On the other hand, religious doctrines "form a sort of paper currency inconvertible with fact, which suits people and circulates the better because of its very badness."[2] Now, most of the current arguments are coloured with this desire to avoid contemplating a future life as a reality of immediate importance. This was not always the case, because in days when men could be frightened by the belief in hell the element of retribution was thought morally useful; but with the present decay of the belief in hell the belief in a future life is only wanted in the sense described above, except where it is a financially indispensable adjunct to existing creeds.

Here we come upon an economic factor of the greatest importance. All priests and presbyters have to live, and, as things are now, the belief in a future life as a consoling uncertainty must be maintained if they are to earn a living. They know, from centuries of experience, how to control wealthy men and wealthy corporations. Newspaper proprietors are often of an origin which makes them depend on social forces and vested interests for social and political success, whatever

[1] See *Humanism*, by F. C. S. Schiller, pp. 230, 236, and 241. The whole essay is worth reading.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 240.

their private opinions may be; and the Christian religion is a vested interest. University Professors are dependent for their very bread and butter on not upsetting popular fetishes; and this consideration applies even more forcibly to journalists, reviewers, and publishers. From long experience of fighting unpopular causes I know quite well that a book of this kind will be received with a conspiracy of silence in certain quarters; whereas if I wrote a volume of vague, sentimental nonsense about the "indissolubility of holy matrimony," or to prove the futility of the "Higher Criticism," the book would be noticed at disproportionate length in certain respectable organs of opinion which I forbear to mention by name.

Yet the belief does not exist in *any serious sense* to-day. The Psychical Research Society fails to enlist popular support only because it takes the belief seriously. An American branch of the society sent out a *questionnaire* which elicited the following results from persons who must of necessity have been interested in the subject, or they would not have replied to, or in most instances even heard of, the questions. Only twenty-two per cent. of the replies indicated "a desire for a future life, whatever the conditions might be." Only twenty-one per cent. had a "real desire for scientific knowledge of the possibility of a future life." Only 1,341 persons out of 3,321 felt "the question of a future life to be of urgent importance to their mental comfort." Scarcely any answers indicate any state of mind but "sheer thoughtlessness and inertia" in regard to the question. Dr. Schiller remarks with some force that the belief is only a "predominating influence in lunatic asylums." It would certainly

die out very quickly among the educated classes but for the established existence of churches and chapels, and the *vis inertiæ* of the odd folklore which is still imparted as "education" to our children in the national schools, and for which Freethinkers still have to pay.

An analysis of the current arguments shows that they all repose either on (*a*) allegations of a divine purpose which necessitates a future life, or (*b*) bare assertions or conjectural analogies drawn from psychical research. The first doctrine is necessary for ecclesiastical purposes; and the second set of "arguments" appeals either to the small minority who do really desire a future life, or who, doubting religious doctrines, desire some kind of substitute for beliefs which are too habitual to be lost without mental discomfort.

There is only one negative point on which all current arguments seem to be agreed, and that is that they leave severely alone the doctrine of the resurrection of the body. How different our mental atmosphere is we can only realise when we read the following lines out of Young's *Night Thoughts*, written in the eighteenth century:—

> Now charnels rattle; scattered limbs and all
> The various bones, obsequious to the call,
> Self-moved, advance; the neck perhaps to meet
> The distant feet; the distant head the feet.
> Dreadful to view, see through the dusky sky
> Fragments of bodies, in confusion, fly
> To distant regions journeying, there to claim
> Deserted members, and complete the frame.

This was clearly meant to be read seriously, and not to provoke the mirth that it causes in a modern reader.

The recent increase in cremation does not look

as if the laity were disposed to take writers like Young seriously nowadays. What is even more inconsistent with an atmosphere of belief in personal immortality is the extreme craving for physical health and longevity in these days as opposed to the salvation of the soul. In proportion as people cease to believe in the resurrection of the body they have begun to concern themselves about its conservation on earth.

Current arguments, or what pass for such, are so chaotic that the only possible way of dealing with them is to take typical books, and not to attempt to group the authors by subject matter. At the end of the last chapter I remarked that the ordinary man got a "better run for his money" by going to the spiritualist than to the priest. I am bound to admit, however, that the sermons of Dr. Momerie, which can now be obtained in a sixpenny edition, are as full-bodied and up-to-date as any modern Christian can desire. I will divide his assertions and arguments into two classes. Dr. Momerie, who was an honest and emotional preacher, laid great stress on the fact that "God was disgraced if there was no immortality." He writes: "Immortality is a debt which the Creator owes to us, and which he is in honour bound to pay. If we were not immortal, he would be eternally disgraced."[1] And again, later: "Is it possible to believe God will neglect you when your mortal form dissolves, and you are called upon to enter the spiritual world? If he clothed the grass of the field, shall he not much more clothe you?"[2]

Dr. Momerie thought that no one could under-

[1] *Sermons on Immortality*, p. 33; these references are to the 6d. edition.

[2] P. 69.

stand the process of evolution without feeling that the whole process was robbed of its meaning if the immortality of the soul were denied. "Immortality is the only possible climax to that creative work which has been in all its myriad stages so wonderful, so divine."[1]

The above extracts come about as near to argument as Dr. Momerie ever does. In the following passages he simply takes refuge in assertions. He remarks that many excellent persons have believed in the immortality of animals, but adroitly dismisses the subject by saying that he is not going to discuss that point, but only the immortality of man. He supplies his readers with just the kind of future life that people would like nowadays if they could believe in it. We are to recognise our friends "by the trend of their lives, the effluence of their spirits; by the atmosphere which surrounds them."[2] I do not know what Dr. Momerie's views were in regard to divorce on earth, but he very freely promises divorce in heaven. "Relationships which are purely formal—*e.g.*, of parent and child, brother and sister, husband and wife—will be dissolved; and relatives who were kept together in life only by the accident of birth or other mundane conventionalities, when set free by death from these artificial bonds, will naturally, inevitably, mercifully drift apart."[3] Some who do not share Dr. Momerie's convictions may attach more value to a divorce which occurs before the grave. This negative blessing, however, is by no means the only joy of heaven, for he very appositely quotes Robert Browning's poem, "Evelyn Hope,"

[1] P. 39. [2] P. 77. [3] P. 80.

to illustrate the very reasonable expectation that Christian men may entertain of celestial flirtation with young ladies from whom "mundane conventionalities" kept their admirers apart on earth. Sometimes, of course, he makes a slip, as where he remarks that, if in the life to come we are unable directly to recognise our earthly companions, "we may yet identify them indirectly by *speech*."[1] He does not, however, explain how they are to "*speak*" without a body. Dr. Momerie easily solves the problem of those who die prematurely, for he admits that reincarnation may be necessary for them, since "almost all the imperial thinkers of the race have said so."[2] He very frankly admits that the desire for future life is not universal, but damns almost one-half of the human race as "utterly abnormal because they desire extinction." I allude, of course, to Buddhists and followers of Confucius, to mention no others.

I may now turn to a more orthodox theologian of the Church of England, Dr. Salmond, whose *Christian Doctrine of Immortality* may almost be called an Anglican text-book. His principal difficulty is how to deal with hell, and in his last chapter he exposes a fashionable heresy known under the name of "Conditional Immortality." This heresy appears to have had considerable vogue on both sides of the Atlantic, and it involves the belief that the soul is of its nature mortal, and will be annihilated unless the process is interrupted by God. He makes the most of what he calls the "universal belief" in a future life, as most writers on his side naturally do, although he admits that

[1] P. 78. [2] P. 87.

the "belief in a future existence of some sort has been peculiarly strong and spontaneous in the most primitive peoples; while the idea of cessation of existence has been rather the product of the thought of the more developed races."[1]

So far as this goes, it would not be difficult to find many other beliefs which have been fairly universal up to the middle of the nineteenth century. Up to that time almost all uneducated, and many educated, persons would never have ventured to disbelieve in miracles; and, though they would not have believed in witchcraft, they would almost certainly have believed in some kind of magic. That the matter is mainly a question of education becomes obvious when one reads a book like Mr. McCabe's *Decay of the Church of Rome*, where he makes it clear that belief in the supernatural appeals mainly to persons below a certain level of culture; Catholics above that level usually give the rein to their emotions, or like indulging a turn for casuistry. Dr. Salmond continues the passage as follows: "The intellectual capacities which have too limited an opportunity here, the emotions which have too narrow a range, the moral sense which demands completer moral adjustments than are witnessed in the present existence—these things are not in us in mockery or for naught."[2]

I shall deal with the moral question in the next chapter, but as regards the intellectual and emotional element the objections would be almost entirely met if every human being was guaranteed an existence of one hundred years.

After refuting various persons who disbelieve in

[1] *Christian Doctrine of Immortality*, p. 485. [2] P. 486.

hell, Dr. Salmond remarks on the last page of his book that

> True theology will confess its limitations, and will not presume to give an answer to every difficulty.....it will be satisfied to be silent where Christ's voice has not spoken, and it will leave much that is dark in man's life here and hereafter to the Eternal Wisdom that keeps so much in reserve.[1]

I now come to *An Outline of Christian Theology*, by Dr. W. N. Clarke, Professor of Christian Theology in Colgate University, New York. This Professor admits the doctrine of immortality to be "incapable of demonstrative evidence"; he thinks that it has been damaged by supposed proofs of simplicity and immateriality. The real evidence he thinks is "more or less indefinable," yet "without such evidence the belief in immortality would fade away." He remarks that man has always *felt* immortal; but this is scarcely a serious argument having regard to what is known about Animism. Man, he writes, is conscious of great spiritual power in emotions and ideas. We cannot believe that this spiritual power depends on a material body. This statement clearly begs the whole question. He then suggests that he cannot believe man's personality and achievements to be wasted. Man is just learning to live when the body dies. This argument of course implies that God will necessarily remedy what we think a grievance.[2]

Five years after this book Professor Rice, of Wesley University, published a book in 1904 on *Christian Truth in an Age of Science*. Professor Rice also protests against the arguments for the simplicity of the soul. He thinks that atoms or electrons may

[1] *Christian Doctrine of Immortality*, p. 534.
[2] *An Outline of Christian Theology*, pp. 192–98.

be immortal, but quotes Professor James's remark: "The enjoyment of the atom-like simplicity of their substance for ever would not, to most people, seem a consummation devoutly to be wished."[1] He agrees with Lotze that there is no metaphysical proof of immortality; but he thinks that there may be a duplicate of the brain with all memories recorded in ether, and that there is no proof of this perishing. This gratuitous hypothesis is entirely inconsistent with the fact that the brain is ether in the sense that it consists of electrons gathered into atoms.[2]

D. Syme, an able Australian writer, published a book on the soul in 1903. Mr. Syme denies that the soul is non-extending or immaterial, and he points out that, since Kant, "almost everyone who has profoundly studied the subject has had to abandon the attempt to prove the immortality of the soul from the metaphysical standpoint." He states a pseudo-scientific argument to show that there must be order, purpose, and harmony in every part of nature. Our religious emotions and instincts are a natural and legitimate product of cosmic evolution. The universal belief in immortality is due to instinct; reason, which "has not much to say in favour of a future state of existence," often errs, but instinct never. Mr. Syme does not seem to realise that instinct is constantly misleading animals, to say nothing of man. Nor, when the problem is closely examined, can it be maintained that the belief in immortality is an instinct at all. In the case of Animism it comes within the category of all reasoning, however bad, derived from dreams and

[1] *Principles of Psychology*, by William James, Vol. I, p. 348.
[2] *Christian Truth in an Age of Science*, pp. 279–83.

other phenomena. John Stuart Mill pointed out that desire for food does not indicate that we shall have an eternal supply of it; and Martineau remarked that it is "hardly warrantable to argue from the mere prevalence of a belief to its truth."[1]

Mr. Syme considers that, if the soul formed this body, it *may* form another; but we have yet to learn from Mr. Syme, or anyone else, how or when the soul did it. He asserts that memory is a remarkable power, and must be present in the germ, as it reproduces ancestral traits in embryo. It is often very vivid when the body is decaying; and in dreams, therefore, he thinks it may survive the body, and continue in some other environment. I need only point out that memory, in the sense here used, is only a figure of speech. The localisation of energy in death and in dreams is probably due to the withdrawal of energy from the rest of the system, so that it becomes concentrated in the nervous system. In any case, it does not constitute any strong argument for immortality.

"The monad," he writes, "can see without eyes, hear without ears, feel without nerves; why, therefore, should not the much superior soul of man do much the same?" The monad here referred to is an organism known to biologists. It is the smallest and simplest animal organism. Of course, it does not see and hear, but is merely affected by surroundings, and its action is palpably physical and chemical. Mr. Syme is arguing from matter acting on matter to matter acting on soul. He suggests

[1] *Study of Religion*, Vol. II, p. 381. I may here remark that Martineau's fine sermon on Immortality in his *Endeavours After Christian Life* adduces no argument but the alleged goodness of God.

that, *if* the soul built up the body from the germs, it is presumably a separable entity; but we have yet to find the embryologist who would admit that it did.

Another school is represented by an American writer called Newman Smyth, whose book, *Through Science to Faith*, is very much on the same lines as the works of Henry Drummond in England. His method is to presuppose lines of evolution, and then to pretend to give scientific proofs of them. It is a gaseous work for sentimental readers. He points out that evolution is a tendency "towards a promise of completeness." Man's spiritual freedom "cannot be completed here, so must be transferred to an environment more fitted to his spiritual nature." It need not necessarily be disembodied; there will be a "happier adaptation to material environment."[1] The connection of soul with body is a "very slight and easily changed connection"; it is no fast and indissoluble bond. In its beginning it is all contained in, and conditioned by, a mere dot of microscopic matter.[2] But, this granted, the soul, if it is in the body at all, is a germ when the body is a germ, and just as dependent on the body as it becomes later. Mr. Newman Smyth infers from the above proposition the "scientific affirmation" that "the dissolution of the body is not necessarily the destruction of all relation of the individual to the outward universe." This is a typical specimen of his scientific affirmations. He then evolves a theory of "survival value due to an increased estimate of individuality." He asserts that Nature, at lower levels, is most attentive to

[1] *Through Science to Faith*, p. 262.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 263.

species, but at the human level is most attentive to the individual; so that we cannot believe this precious individuality to be lost. Yet even Tennyson exposed the fallacy of Nature being supposed to care either for the type or for the species. If there is any sense in the proposition at all, we can only infer that Nature cares for man so long as he has a body, and is eager to destroy that body as soon as possible after it is dead. We are then told that the will to live becomes a "clear spiritual flame" in man; that it is "creative, overcomes hostile forces, and is often strongest at death." We are asked how this will to live can be physically extinguished; but we may well ask how it is to survive, except in a physical form. The fact that man has a higher nervous system than other animals explains the phenomena referred to by Mr. Newman Smyth, but does not bridge the gulf.[1]

Mr. H. Solly published a book entitled *Know Thyself* in 1905. His main argument is that "material bodies are created for an existence of a longer or a shorter period," and then naturally perish. The soul is quite different, for there is no limit to the growth of conscience, mind, and emotions. The answer to this is that material objects last just as long as their molecules hold together, and there is no proof that man lasts any longer.

We find rather more serious arguments in *Man and the Universe*, by Sir Oliver Lodge, F.R.S. He is by no means orthodox in the Christian sense. For instance: "If a thing has no personality, no character, no individuality.....it will

[1] *Through Science to Faith*, pp. 260–73.

not persist."[1] This cuts off an insect, but does not cut off some of the higher animals, as Lodge admits. We have all existed from eternity, since the law of persistence applies before and after. The future life is a continuous evolution of the mind, and even the immortality of the *individual* soul is not asserted, because we are all to be finally absorbed, a long time hence. Nevertheless, not all personalities persist, since some are not worth it. Lodge bases part of his doctrine on a certain doctrine of evolution. From his point of view,

> the law of evolution is that good shall on the whole increase in the universe with the process of the suns; that immortality itself is a special case of a more general law—namely, that in the whole universe nothing really finally perishes that is worth keeping, that nothing once achieved is ever thrown away.[2]

I bow to the eminence of Sir Oliver Lodge as a physicist, but I do not understand how this statement of values can be inferred from physical formulæ. The book, however, gives rise to the suspicion that the writer is more influenced by arguments based on psychical research than by generalisations like the above. I will not, however, deal with these arguments here, as I attempted to cover all this ground in the last chapter.

I ought perhaps to make some allusion to Maeterlinck, who has written several fugitive essays on the subject; but the only coherent inference I can draw from them is that he does not himself believe in personal immortality, but thinks that it affords a charming exercise for the imagination particularly suited to his rather vaporous

[1] *Science and Faith:* An Address delivered at the City Temple, November, 1895, p. 8.
[2] *Man and the Universe*, p. 181.

method of dealing with men and things. His writing, however, will always command some attention owing to the attraction of his literary style.

In dealing with the philosophy of the nineteenth century I did not refer to the English poets. They ought perhaps not to be omitted, because they are so often quoted in the pulpit, and referred to by pious believers in conversation with persons like myself. Thus when I was at school I used to be told that if I was not content with Christian doctrine I might at least consider that these beliefs were valued by great men like Browning and Tennyson, or even Wordsworth. On looking into the matter more closely, one finds that the poetry of Wordsworth, outside his strictly orthodox and then usually uninspired moments, scarcely supports anything but a vague pantheism and a vague doctrine of pre-existence. Matthew Arnold and Clough are incessantly "moaning over spilt milk," as Leslie Stephen remarked. Tennyson's beliefs consisted of "faintly trusting the larger hope," and writing beautiful verse about "truths that never can be proved." He rarely gets any further than his well-known lines:—

> What hope of answer, or redress?
> Behind the veil, behind the veil.

Browning generally catered for a type of opinion which I have described elsewhere.[1] He succeeded

[1] "The more educated classes seem to have relapsed into a vague theism which necessitated little more than the belief in a personal God and personal immortality, together with a willingness to accept the more important and plausible miracles, and to acquiesce in the rest as being what Sir Leslie Stephen admirably calls congenial incidents." Like Mr. Lecky, they were inclined to "believe that the radii of a circle have a tendency to be equal"; but they did not wish "to push the spirit of geometry too far." *Early Victorian and Other Papers* (Elkin Mathews), p. 5.

because he was extremely vague and sentimental and full of animal spirits. Professor Santayana has admirably summed him up as follows :—

> He had no idea of anything eternal ; and so he gave, as he would probably have said, a filling into the empty Christian immortality by making every man busy in it about many things. And to the irrational man, to the boy, it is no unpleasant idea to have an infinite number of days to live through, an infinite number of dinners to eat, with an infinity of fresh fights and new love affairs, and no end of last rides together.[1]

I cannot resist quoting a further passage from the same essay, which is entitled "The Poetry of Barbarism":—

> The zest of life becomes a cosmic emotion ; we lump the whole together and cry "Hurrah for the Universe." A faith which is thus a pure matter of lustiness and inebriation, rises and falls, attracts or repels, with the ebb and flow of the mood from which it springs. It is invincible because unseizable ; it is as safe from refutation as it is rebellious to embodiment ; but it cannot enlighten or correct the passions on which it feeds. Like a servile priest, it flatters them in the name of heaven. It cloaks irrationality in sanctimony, and its admiration for every bluff folly, being thus justified by a theory, becomes a positive fanaticism, eager to defend any wayward impulse.[2]

Thus, for the purposes of this book, I may here leave Browning to "greet the unseen with a cheer." I do not wish to attack his reputation as a poet or a man ; he was certainly a great man and a great poet ; but there are many like myself whose enjoyment of certain poems has been permanently spoiled by the egregious nonsense that English Philistines talk about a man whom they do not understand, when they desire to be edified, and to bring up the

[1] *Poetry and Religion*, p. 204. [2] P. 206.

young in the way they should go. I should perhaps add that in this connection I am thinking not of my parents or relations, but only of what may be called the literary proletariat of this country, whose insipid taste and half-baked notions inspire what is too often described as contemporary "thought."

Almost the last book of note on this subject was published in 1912. It is entitled *The Drama of Love and Death*, and is written by Edward Carpenter. Mr. Carpenter does not often write verse, though when he does it is very good; but he has more than any writer in this generation the mind of a poet. I have never read any book which came so near to persuading me that human individuality continues beyond the grave. Mr. Carpenter chooses his similes with the delicacy and precision of Dante or Apollonius Rhodius, and his analogies, however unsubstantial, always fit like a glove. I cannot take a better instance than his comparison of the human soul to the Rose of Jericho:—

> There is a plant of the Syrian deserts—the Rose of Jericho—about the size of our common daisy plant, and bearing a similar flower, which in dry seasons, when the earth about its roots is turned into mere sand, has the presence of mind to detach itself from its hold altogether and to roll itself into a mere ball—flower, root, and all. It is then blown along the plains by the wind, and travels away until it reaches some moist and sheltered spot, when it expands again and takes hold on the ground, uplifts its head, and merrily blooms once more. Like the little rose of Jericho, the human soul has at times to draw in its roots (which we may compare to the animal part) and separate them from their earthly entanglement; even the sun in heaven, which it knows distantly for the source of its life, may be obscured; but

> compacting itself for the nonce into a sturdy ball, it starts gaily on its far adventure.[1]

Here is a simile so good in itself that it almost compels the reader to belief in the survival of the soul, and this extract is only typical of the first half of the book. Mr. Carpenter's conviction is so sincere and so beautifully expressed that it easily becomes infectious. He is obviously much influenced by Plato, and he gives the following "very rough and tentative" analysis of the soul into (1) the eternal and immortal self; (2) the inner personal ego or human soul; (3) the true personality or animal self; (4) the actual body. The eternal self is a kind of world soul which at other times he calls the "race self." The personal self "includes the finer and subtler elements of character which we know so well in our friends, yet find so difficult to describe."[2]

We are told that after death the central self "goes on to be the birth source (maybe) of numberless lives to come," though, on the other hand, it is equally clear that the "actual visible body dies, perishes, and is broken up and ceases as an individual body to exist." The struggle of death is concerned with the human and animal parts of the soul which are being dispersed. Mr. Carpenter deals very well with the difficulty as to animals. He thinks that

> in the early stages of animals and primitive human life the race self is paramount, and that each individual self proceeds from it much in the same way as a bud proceeds from the stem of a growing plant.....and is absorbed into it again at death. There are no individual and death-surviving souls produced, apart from the race soul.[3]

[1] Pp. 97 and 98. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 85. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 237.

He applies this doctrine of the race self to the primitive and earliest man :—

> The race self in all these cases moves onwards, up-gathering the experiences of the individuals, wise with their united knowledge, and rich with their countless memories. And these tracts again of experience, knowledge, and memory, largely in a vague and generalised form, sometimes in a sharp, individualised, and detailed form, are transmitted from the race self to its later individuals and off-shoots. Thus a kind of broken re-incarnation occurs by which streaks of memory and habit pass down time from one individual to another, and by which—perhaps in us later races—the persistent intimations of immortality and persuasions of having lived before are accounted for.[1]

This beautiful passage is perhaps the best attempt so far made to adumbrate what the late Samuel Butler called "unconscious memory."

Mr. Carpenter, however, imagines that at a later stage of progress the human individual finds a divine soul, and evolves his inner body to a point where it cannot be broken up again. This once achieved, the human soul is reincarnated complete, through successive materialisations or condensations in other spheres, and without again undergoing the ordinary race-birth and death. Mr. Carpenter gives a very good summary of his arguments[2] which are, when analysed, almost entirely based on a complete acceptance of Mr. Myers's doctrines. He thinks that the surviving self will arise from a harmony between the supraliminal self and the subliminal self; especially because the subliminal self sometimes shows remarkable activity even in the hour of bodily death. He asserts that the soul is independent of the material body because "all through

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 228. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 172.

life, by reason of its faculties of clairvoyance, transposition of senses, and so forth.....it reaches a deep conviction of its own duration beyond the life of the body."[1]

He compares the act of death to a transformation of the human soul analogous to the new phases which the body takes at birth, at weaning, at teething, at puberty, and at the change of life. He suggests that remarkable transformations of the soul or inner life are associated with these outer phases of physical life. Similarly he asserts that the last great bodily change is accompanied by the "development or extension of hidden psychic powers." The whole of this passage is most impressive, and should be read by anyone who wishes to keep an open mind in regard to this subject. Unfortunately, however, the last half of the book enormously destroys the force of the first half. Mr. Carpenter implicitly believes in all the phenomena which are the stock-in-trade of the spiritualist world. He implicitly believes in the results of spirit photographs, he is vastly impressed by the experiments in the weighing of souls, and reports medical experiments tending to show that the soul weighs anything from three-quarters of an ounce to one ounce. He thinks it worth his while to record a speculation by a Professor to the effect that "a human soul weighing a fraction only of an ounce, but of like shape and size to the human body,.....might quite naturally rise in the air till it attained its position of equilibrium at a great height up—say in a region thirty-five to eighty miles over the earth—which would thus become the first abode of the departed."

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 172.

As I have the honour of some slight acquaintance with Mr. Carpenter, I wrote and asked him whether he had any first-hand knowledge of spiritualistic phenomena, and he replied that "most of his lore was second-hand," but still reiterated his belief in the results. It is, of course, impossible to know whether, supposing Mr. Carpenter became sceptical in regard to spiritualism, he would cease to believe in personal immortality; but I cannot help feeling that his arguments would be much more forcible if they could be entirely detached from spiritualistic assumptions. "*Non tali auxilio, non defensoribus istis*," will Mr. Carpenter convert those who, like myself, are neither Christians nor spiritualists. It is, however, interesting to observe that the latest work defending this belief omits all religious arguments from cover to cover; we are delivered from theology, and given fairy-tales instead. In an Appendix to this chapter I give some descriptions of hell. I think that most people will agree with me in vastly preferring Mr. Carpenter's fairy-tales, if such they are.

Appendix to Chapter VII.

There is some danger nowadays of people forgetting the doctrines which edified their forefathers, and which were employed by the Churches to preserve their authority over the consciences of mankind. I have therefore culled the following extracts:—

> At that, the greatest of all spectacles, how shall I admire, how laugh, how rejoice, how exult, when I behold so many proud monarchs groaning in the lowest

abyss of darkness? So many magistrates liquefying in fiercer flames than they ever kindled against the cross; so many sage philosophers blushing in red-hot fires with their deluded pupils; so many musicians more tuneful than ever in the expression of their woe; so many dancers tripping more nimbly from anguish than ever before from applause.—*Tertullian.*

That the saints may enjoy their beatitude more richly, a perfect sight is granted to them of the punishment of the damned.—*St. Thomas Aquinas.*

The smoke of their torment shall ascend in the sight of the redeemed for ever and for ever. This bright display of the divine character will be most entertaining to all who love God, and will give them the highest and most ineffable pleasure. Should the fire of this eternal punishment cease, it would in a great measure obscure the light of heaven, and put an end to a great part of the happiness and glory of the blessed.—*Hopkins* (an eminent Puritan divine).

I may conclude with two specimens from the nineteenth century:—

There is a real fire in hell. Thy body shall be suffused with agony; thy head tormented with racking pains; thine eyes starting from their sockets with sights of blood and woe; thine ears tortured with horrid sounds; thy heart beating high with fever, thy pulse rattling with anguish, thy limbs cracking in the flame, every vein a pathway for the fire to tread, every nerve a string upon which the devil shall for ever play his diabolical tune of hell's unutterable lament.—*Spurgeon.*

In my book on *Religious Persecution* I mentioned the writings of a Jesuit who equips the souls of the wicked with an asbestos covering so that they shall never be consumed by fire. The Reverend Father Furniss has written, in a similar strain, a charming "book for children" entitled *A Night of Hell.* "Look at that girl," he writes;

what a terrible dress she has on; it is made of fire. She wears a bonnet of fire, which is pressed down all over

> her head. It scorches the skull and melts the brain. See, she is on fire from head to foot. If she were here, she would be burnt to death in a moment; but she is in hell, where fire burns, but does not kill. Look at that boy. Listen. There is a sound like a boiling kettle. What does it mean? It means this: the blood is boiling in the boy's veins. The brains are boiling in his head. The marrow is boiling in his bones.

I cannot conclude without a quotation, which I cannot help curtailing, with regard to the baking of a baby, by the same engaging writer. "Hear how it screams," he writes;

> see how it twists itself about. It beats its head against the roof of the oven. It stamps its little feet upon the floor. On its face is an expression of the most appalling despair.

Chapter VIII.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Richard Baron Westbury,
Lord High Chancellor of England

. . . . .
. . . .

During his three years' tenure of office
He abolished the ancient method of conveying land,
The Time-honoured institution of the Insolvents' Court,
And
The Eternity of Punishment.
Towards the close of his earthly career
In the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council
He dismissed Hell with costs,
And took away from orthodox members of the Church of England
Their last hope of everlasting damnation.

This comic epitaph, composed after a famous decision of Westbury's, in 1865, marks an epoch in ecclesiastical and national history; for it called public attention to the fact that the more enlightened type of Englishman had ceased to believe in hell, and that to this extent the belief in future rewards and punishments as a guarantee of public and private morality had ceased to exist. I do not propose to overload this chapter by discussing the remnants of this belief, with which I dealt many years ago in my book on *Religious Persecution*.[1]

[1] See the chapter "Religion and Morality."

An ancient Greek thinker astutely argued that, as human laws did not catch every offence in their net, it was necessary to invoke some supernatural machinery as a deterrent of secret transgressions; but most people to-day would agree that this consideration has little to do with morality as we understand it, and has seldom had much practical effect, owing to the facilities for evading future punishment provided by religious bodies, such as, for example, "death-bed repentance."

The sanctions of heaven and hell have more recently been watered down into more subtle forms of retribution. Writers differing as widely as the late Dean Farrar, Dr. Momerie, and Dr. Schiller agree in regarding character as an "investment," to use Dr. Schiller's phrase, "more permanent and more decisive of our weal and woe than all the outward goods men set their hearts upon, rather than as a transitory bubble to whose splendour it matters not one whit whether it be pure translucence refracting the radiance of the sunlight, or the iridescent film that coats decay."[1] Yet, after all, this is nothing more than the revival of the old idea of a man saving his soul expressed in different and ethical language. It simply means that the good man is to be comfortable for all eternity in the possession of a good character, and that the bad man is to be wretched for all eternity by being made conscious of his bad character. The use of the word "investment" seems to take the argument out of the category of real morality, which implies being virtuous for the sake of virtue. If, for example, eternal happiness depended on being

[1] Schiller's *Humanism*, p. 253.

able to master all the propositions in the First Book of Euclid, many persons might employ a crammer for the purposes of a celestial examination; yet such success as was achieved by persons who obtained such knowledge by this method would be no mark of mathematical ability. Similarly, to "improve character" (if the phrase can be used at all) for the mere purpose of enjoying eternal happiness would not really be improving character intrinsically; it would amount to no more than a man abstaining from drunkenness because he could make more money by being sober. My simile is chosen to illustrate a common confusion of thought. I shall be told that many men would not be sober if they did not wish to succeed in business. But the real question is: *Why* do they wish to succeed in business, or any other occupation? It may be said that some successful business men are anti-social at heart, or that at best they merely want a sense of power, or to satisfy purely personal ambitions. In such cases it seems to me immaterial, from the strictly ethical point of view (as opposed to a purely utilitarian point of view), whether such men give way to drink or succeed in unworthy ambitions. But in the ordinary case a man wants to succeed in business because of his affection for his wife and family, or, if he has none, then because of his desire to benefit his fellows, either by the efficient performance of his work or by acquiring leisure in later life for some form of social service. Ultimately, therefore, we find that the sobriety in question is prompted by a social sentiment or sanction, which is (as I think) the only foundation of real morality. Man is a moral because and so

far as he is a social, animal. In normal men moral habits are formed by a favourable environment of early training, etc., acting on a sound heredity.[1]

The retribution argument also fails for another reason. If it is good for eternity, it is also good for a limited period like the period of human life. Dr. Momerie points out very forcibly that the "odious experience" of such anti-social persons as the miser or the burglar "constitutes in very truth a hell."[2] The liberal theologian wants to pile on the agony by making such persons realise in another world how detestable their characters are; but this cannot be done without radically altering their characters by some purgatorial process, which necessarily implies that "retribution" would eventually result in moral improvement and consequent happiness.[3]

Dr. Schiller's argument, however, has two barrels. Not only does a future life necessitate morality, but morality also necessitates a future life. Dr. Schiller sets out to prove that if "the universe is at heart ethical" immortal life is deducible from this postulate, and "human valuations" must have some "significance in establishing the nature of things." He asserts that we "must assume a moral cosmos" in the same manner as we are compelled to assume a "knowable cosmos." The assumption of a knowable cosmos in the philosophic sense indicated by Dr. Schiller is a question of pure metaphysic, on which I do not happen to agree with him. I prefer Mr.

[1] For a further expansion of this argument see my *Modern Morality and Modern Toleration* (Watts; 3d.).
[2] *Sermons on Immortality*, p. 112.
[3] Schiller's *Humanism*, pp. 253, 259, and 260.

Bertrand Russell's view, which is that "we are left to the piecemeal investigation of the world, and are unable to know the characters of those parts of the universe that are remote from our experience."[1] Human beings agree as to the reality of certain truths, but that does not convince me that they must, for that purpose, assume a cosmos knowable as a whole, although they may assume parts of it to be knowable. I, therefore, do not feel myself compelled to assume a "moral cosmos" any more than a knowable cosmos.

Huxley pointed out in his famous lecture on "Evolution and Ethics" that the cosmos is completely non-moral, and that human beings were constantly fighting the cosmic process. But then human beings are a result of the cosmic process, and so is human morality. Yet the result of a process may be as seemingly opposed to that process as an eddy in a stream seems opposed to the stream. Thus a community of ants is equally a result of the cosmic process. The ants could not apparently survive unless they lived according to highly complicated rules which bear some analogy to those of human society. A self-conscious ant might no doubt be inclined to assert that its community was the climax of the cosmic process, and revealed for the first time the real purpose of the universe. It might further assert that the moral ideas of the ant community showed that the cosmos is a "moral cosmos" with the same underlying rules of conduct as those which govern the harmony of the ant-hill; but it would probably fail to convert Dr. Schiller and his disciples to this

[1] *Problems of Philosophy*, pp. 226 and 227.

view. Nevertheless, I cannot see how on Dr. Schiller's reasoning the ant could be refuted. It would have as much right to its opinion as Dr. Schiller to his.

The assumption of the cosmos as a kind of magnified humanity is little but a substitute for the older idea that God is ruling the universe in direct reference to the best desires of the human race, and that our morality has a supernatural sanction. The whole notion is as geocentric or egocentric as the now obsolete opinion that the sun goes round the earth, and it no doubt reposes on the same basis of personal vanity. If a man feels a cause sacred, he is inclined to identify it with God or the universe, and this applies even more forcibly to the question of his own existence. He naturally does not like to feel that his affairs or the affairs of the human race are not of paramount importance in the universe. Yet, apart from the claims of revealed religion, this feeling seems to have no rational justification whatever.[1]

I will now deal with some of the results we are promised if we assume that the universe is not ethical, and if there is no future life; but it is only fair to point out that we are never told exactly what sort of future life is to vindicate our morality when we get outside the sphere of rewards and punishments. Dr. Schiller tells us that "goodness is wasted" because "the good that men *are*" perishes with their deaths. I may take as an

[1] Dr. Schiller mentions a lady who wrote in answer to the *questionnaire* that she wanted a future life when she felt well and annihilation when she felt ill. This well shows how emotional all these desires and beliefs are.

example of this the suicide of Sir Samuel Romilly in a fit of grief over his wife's death. His death occurred just when he might have achieved some notable reforms. The answer to Dr. Schiller is that men must learn, as they are learning, to take more care of their mental and physical health if they want to work out their ideas, and that no one man is indispensable for the purpose. There is a fine saying of Brewster on the sub-conscious attitude of men to death :—

> Au fond, ils ne s'en émeuvent pas. Ils n'ont pas plus peur que les feuilles des arbres jaunissant dans les brouillards de l'automne. Un instinct impérissable les avertit que s'ils sont la feuille qui va tomber, ils sont aussi l'arbre sur lequel elle repoussera, et la terre qui les porte l'un et l'autre.[1].....Nos sensations ne meurent pas, car elles ne sont pas en nous ; c'est nous qui sommes en elles. Nous sommes les colonnes de poussière qui s'élèvent et tournoyent au carrefour des vents, et peu nous importe où la colonne s'abat, car les grains de sable sont incorruptibles et déjà le vent a repris sa course.[2]

I think this is the right answer to those who minimise the motive of working for the rather indefinite future of the race. The point is that we *are* the race, whether past, present, or future, as much as the leaves are part of the tree.[3]

I now come to the thorny question of the coincidence of virtue and happiness. Dr. Schiller points out that "rewards and punishments for conduct are not to be looked upon as *motives* to conduct, but as the natural *results* of conduct inevitable in a morally ordered universe," and these results are to

[1] *L'Ame Païenne*, p. 83. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 194.
[3] Some more commonplace considerations are fully given in my chapter on "Religion and Morality" in *Religious Persecution*.

be completed in a future life. I cannot see the necessity of assuming either "a morally ordered universe" or a future life. The whole problem has been admirably stated in Sir Leslie Stephen's *Science of Ethics*. The most vital element of individual happiness is social health. Society is an organism growing or decaying under certain rules and conditions. Take away the moral and co-operative instincts of the individuals composing it, and it dies.[1] But in so far as those instincts flourish it lives, and produces happiness. "A moral rule is a statement of a condition of social welfare." Some persons may be susceptible to no argument but that of "the gallows," and they must no doubt be restrained by society; but most people are happy because they are as virtuous as the contemporary welfare of the social organism demands. If, however, they exceed this standard, then the exercise of the faculty of virtue must be its own reward, and happiness Aristotle defined as the exercise of our best faculties.

Stephen admits that Regulus might have "passed a very agreeable old age at Capua as a retired general officer," and that, had he given way to his weaker impulses, "he might have made the discovery—not a very rare one—that remorse is among the passions most easily lived down." The important point is that, if Regulus had not sacrificed himself to the Carthaginians, the health and welfare of Roman society would have been irretrievably injured, and Regulus would thereby have suffered himself, for he would have begun to lose all the ideals which he most loved, and which were most

[1] I have often thought that the confessions of criminals are prompted by a social impulse.

himself. It is, nevertheless, quite true that an excess of virtue may not coincide with happiness. We may imagine the suffering of a sensitive and humane man like Sir Samuel Romilly at not being able to save young children from the gallows. In 1808 he succeeded in abolishing the death penalty for thefts from private persons, though not from tradesmen; but he can scarcely have been satisfied with this result. Having early in life become a Deist, he vainly tried to overcome the objections of a Christian community to giving the poor the same right of divorce as Napoleon had done, and which they have not got in England even now. The sufferings of the poor, due to the prejudice and stupidity of the governing classes, must have been as exasperating to him as they are to many non-Christians now; but he must have felt that he was at least doing what he could. I doubt if any decent man would prefer to be George IV rather than Romilly, although George IV, with his fine taste in literature and a certain capacity for affection in early life, must have enjoyed a considerable amount of happiness. Such considerations as these do not plunge many persons "into that unfathomable abyss, where Pessimism fraternises with Scepticism, and they hug their miseries in chaos undisguised."[1]

It may be true to some extent, as Gibbon wrote in his autobiography, that "the abbreviation of time and the failure of hope will always tinge with a browner shade the evening of life."[2] It may also

[1] Schiller's *Humanism*, p. 262.

[2] The *Times* was once unwary enough to discuss this remark on its merits in a leading article, but had to print a few letters from indignant believers in a future life the next day!

be true that younger persons may at times be disagreeably conscious of the uncertainty of life, to use the phrase with which Gibbon began his will. But these are not permanent moods, and do not paralyse human activity; in fact, the thought that life is short is often a great stimulant. As I have quoted in a previous chapter from Aristotle, a man must live as if he were immortal.

To my mind, the most deeply depressing aspect of the whole problem is the question of poverty. How can any ordinary man expect to live virtuously when bringing up a family on less than a pound a week? There may well be a class of persons who respond to no argument but the gallows; but, short of diseased heredity, such persons are the poor. We read every day of petty thefts, of crimes of violence, of cruelty to wives and children, of habitual drunkenness, and the like. How many respectable readers of the police-court reports ask themselves whether they would have succeeded in remaining honest, good-tempered, and humane under such conditions as extreme poverty represents? Most people are content to refer the poor to the Bible and the Court missionary. The poor are to be consoled by reading such fables as the story of Dives and Lazarus; by being told that the divine government of the world is all for the best, and that it is highly sinful to limit their families. They must be deprived of money and liberty and handed over to officials with stamped cards; they must, in short, be treated as slaves to be kept as healthy as possible for the sake of their employers, but rigidly apart from the joys and sorrows and responsibilities of the normal man. If a poor man cannot look after his family as a rich man can, then his children

are in certain cases taken away and put into reformatories[1] or industrial schools.

How can virtue be expected from men and women reduced to a servile condition, and half-starved of the necessaries of human life; and what can be done to promote it? Very little, I think, by preaching doctrines of a future life, which have, as Dr. Schiller has clearly shown, no real interest for most men and women. Still less by teaching the poor that they must breed families irresponsibly, because God will somehow find food for all children brought into the world, on the same principle on which the early Christians refused to shave their beards—because God made the beards grow; and on which the clergy denounced the use of anæsthetics in childbirth—because God had ordained suffering.

We can promote morality among the poor only by mitigating poverty where we cannot abolish it, by giving them the right to self-respect and liberty that every free citizen ought to have, and by no longer defrauding them of such rights by preaching the compensations of a future life, in which, *for all practical purposes*, very few of us believe. If the decline of the belief in personal immortality achieved no more than the proper treatment of poverty, the ethical need of such a belief could scarcely be alleged; and it is highly significant that the remarkable humanitarian developments in European history from 1750 to our own time have coincided with the progressive decline of that belief.

I may perhaps be pardoned for asking again

[1] See Mr. Belloc's *Servile State*, *passim*.

what kind of morality is to be promoted by *what kind* of future life. A scheme of rewards and punishments is clear enough, but such a scheme is at best no more than a collateral security for real morality. A mere continuance of this life is not likely to make good people better or bad people worse. I have shown that there are as many and various conceptions of a future life as there are of morality; but I have failed to detect any practical or theoretical connection between any given system of morality and any given idea of a future life, except on a basis of rewards and punishments.

CONCLUSION

"Materialism and Idealism, Theism and Atheism, the doctrine of the Soul and its mortality or immortality, appear in the history of philosophy like the shades of the Scandinavian heroes, eternally slaying one another and eternally coming to life again in a metaphysical 'Nifelheim.'.....Generation after generation, philosophy has been doomed to roll the stone uphill; and, just as all the world swore it was at the top, down it has rolled to the bottom again."—*Huxley.*

In attempting to recapitulate such portions of the foregoing chapters as bear on the question of personal immortality, I shall not deal particularly with any ideas of reabsorption or survival in a kind of collective consciousness, as they are really of no great interest for us. What most of us want to know is whether we are to be reunited to those we loved in this life, and whether we persist individually beyond the grave.

The more one traces the history of the question, the more doubtful it seems whether the various beliefs in a future state have produced more happiness than unhappiness.[1] On the whole, it seems clear that such beliefs have very seldom made the idea of death at all attractive to the normal human being; while many have been acutely tortured by fears of hell either during

[1] Professor Frazer, in his last book, well points out what ghastly sacrifices of life and property are entailed by these beliefs.

life, like the poet Cowper, or at the approach of death. Instances of the latter phase are by no means unknown even to the present generation. Ordinary men and women go through life now (as they always have done) thinking as little as possible about death, except when the subject is forced on their attention, either in regard to their personal bereavements, their health, or their property. In modern times we are less troubled about doctrines of hell; but we find it difficult to face with equanimity the prospect of any absolute break with our existing habits and environment.

In regard to the pre-Christian history of the subject, most men are well agreed as to the facts. These facts are summarised very clearly and impartially, for instance, by Dr. Salmond. I agree with him that it would be unsafe to declare dogmatically that any tribe of savages has no belief at all in survival; but he admits that such beliefs are puzzling in their diversity; that the soul is frequently thought to be mortal; that in some cases the women and the lower orders of the tribe are excluded from a future life; that the "belief has been shaped and coloured by the climate, geographical position, and circumstances of different races," though in most cases "it has taken the form of a belief in an underworld and a shadowy existence there."[1] Dr. Salmond also admits that the retributive effect of a future life was largely "neutralised by the fatal part allowed to magic,"[2] just as my readers will have noted that it has been, and still is, neutralised by various devices of the same kind in the Christian Churches. Dr. Salmond

[1] *Christian Doctrine of Immortality*, p. 15. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 56.

devotes much more space to Oriental beliefs—especially those of the Persians and Babylonians and Hindus—than I have found convenient to do; but he does not deny that "the resemblance between the Hebrew Sheol, the Homeric Hades, and the Babylonian Arallu is unmistakable."[1] His account of Greek and Roman beliefs is very just and very learned.

Nor do I dispute his proposition that from his point of view "Christianity translated a guess, a dream, a longing, a probability, into a certainty."[2] Any Christian believer must accept this. At the same time, it is extremely difficult to swallow the modern Christian theory that Jehovah was leading up to a revelation through Christ by dark and ambiguous hints of a future life to the savages and heathen. More primitive forms of belief are clearly due to the same sort of childlike reasoning that leads to magic, animal-worship, odd theories of sexual reproduction, fetishism, and many other discarded make-shifts of the human mind for explaining the universe to itself. Revelation should surely be complete if it is to be efficacious, and should not consist of a series of mystifications. In fact, this argument forcibly applies to our own time. Why should belief in the Christian faith be an act of dubious inference, based on an inward but emotional conviction which we are told to cultivate not on intellectual, but on moral, grounds? It is urged that there is a kind of heroic virtue in believing in what we should never accept on rational grounds in ordinary life. This, however, was never the

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 173. Note specially the interesting account of the Persian millennium on earth, p. 91.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 465.

attitude of theologians in less sceptical ages ; such a persuasion is absolutely antithetical to any doctrine of exclusive salvation. The theologian implicitly trusted in the force of his own arguments ; nothing but sheer moral perversity could induce any reasonable person to reject the rational basis of revealed religion. From that point of view a disbeliever was exactly like a man who should in these days force his company on the world at large when suffering from scarlet fever, under the pretence of demonstrating that it was not really harmful, but with the real and secret purpose of spreading the disease far and wide.

It seems scarcely necessary to condense the rough summary which I have already made of philosophic and metaphysical arguments about the nature of the soul. They are for the most part variations of the doctrines expounded by Aristotle, Plato, Descartes, Spinoza, and Leibnitz, frequently dished up for theological consumption. Such belief in immortality as exists in our own time is almost more allied to theories of Animism and Reincarnation than to metaphysic, though as belief in the supernatural wanes many would lend a willing ear to any philosopher who could bring conviction to them. Most sound philosophers since Kant have either sought refuge in various forms of pantheism or in the alleged divine government of the world. They have nearly all abandoned any attempt at metaphysical proof of personal immortality. Outside religious circles psychical research holds the field of serious inquiry, and the mantle of St. Thomas Aquinas has fallen upon Sir Oliver Lodge.

Time alone will decide between the apparently irreconcilable tenets of Spiritualism and Materialism.

It may be that we shall one day understand how a spiritualist theory of immortal souls fits into all that we now recognise as cause and effect; but such a reconciliation seems inconceivable at present. Mr. Mallock pointed out in 1879 that the whole problem is as apparently contradictory as the common paradoxes of free-will and determinism, but he does not seem to have made any definite step in the direction of constructive theology.[1]

Meanwhile we all have to *act* on one supposition or another. We cannot stand still. Are we to save our souls rather than our bodies, as monks and nuns are supposed to do? Are we to promote justice in this world without relying on the ultimate justice of the next? Are we never to marry more than once, so as to avoid awkward readjustments of intimate relationships in the next world? Are we to absorb our energies in contemplating reunion with the dead, or are we to make an effort to reconstruct happiness with new affections and new friendships? Are we to aim at a reasonably long life, or are we to be reckless with our lives in order to achieve eternal bliss as soon as possible? Are we to build our human institutions on supernatural foundations (such as a sacramental bond of indissoluble marriage), or on the dictates of reason and common sense? Are we to base our morality on principles which are to win approval in the next world because they harmonise with divine commands, or on principles which conduce to the health and well-being of human society as we know it? These, and these only, are the tests of real belief in personal immortality, and they can readily be

[1] See his admirable book, *Is Life Worth Living?*

applied to all that is going on in our midst. The result in individual cases is often more temperamental than strictly religious. Many half-believers cling to the past and resolve to put aside problems which require a good deal of reflection to weigh, even if they do not consciously evade any process of self-examination. Others shrink from the idea of being lost in a desolately vast and overpowering universe, much in the same way as they shrink from reading a book like Mr. Wells's *Time Machine*.

The final issue is veiled from us all, but it is good at times to take stock of our beliefs and to attempt some imaginative comprehension of what our forebears believed. "Look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged."

We have all experienced the shiver of being face to face with the death of those dearest to us, and some of us know what it is to have faced almost certain death in person. At such moments surely our only fortifying thought is that the whole is greater than the part, and that all that in which and for which we have lived will survive our individual selves, perishable organisms as we are.

Whether all that we mean by the words *goodness*, *beauty*, and *intelligence* mysteriously interpenetrates the universe, or is merely part of our terrestrial humanity, each of us can in some sense feel as Emily Brontë felt when she wrote a few hours before she died :—

> Though earth and man were gone,
> And suns and universes ceased to be,
> And Thou wert left alone,
> Every existence would exist in Thee.

There is no room for Death,
Nor atom that his might could render void ;
Thou—Thou art Being and Breath,
And what Thou art can never be destroyed.

Nor need we wait for the moment of death to bring us this illumination, for Spinoza taught us that it should pervade our lives. As Professor Santayana points out in his admirable introduction to the *Ethics of Spinoza*[1] :—

> When a man's life is over, it remains true that he has lived ; it remains true that he has been one sort of man and not another. In the infinite mosaic of history that bit has its unfading colour and its perpetual function and effect.....The fact of him is a part for ever of the infinite context of facts. This sort of immortality belongs passively to everything ; but to the intellectual part of man it belongs actively also, because, in so far as it knows the eternity of truth and is absorbed in it, the mind *lives* in that eternity. In caring only for the eternal, it has ceased to care for that part of itself which can die.

Our religious friends will no doubt tell us that all this is hollow, that we ought to sing or hear hymns about the Atonement or celestial joys on our deathbeds, instead of indulging in mere intellectual contemplation. But the time is fast coming when modern men and women will find such vague emotions an insufficient distraction in the profound crises of life. They will demand, and obtain, a larger view of the universe than the Christian cosmogony. The power and wealth of the Churches have too long obscured the vision of reality.

"When their tabernacles are broken down, and the sun in his strength quells at last the unclean

[1] P. xviii. The book is published by J. M. Dent and Co.

fumes of their censers and sacrifices, their eyes are blinded with that splendour, and they cry out that the world is darkened"—wrote Sir Frederick Pollock more than thirty years ago.[1] The cry is louder than ever to-day, and it may at any time be followed up by hostilities of a less subterranean kind than bullying booksellers about their wares. When the real battle begins, victory will come to those who have never flinched from contemplating real facts and real issues. Such men and women no more flinch in death than they do in life; for, indeed, a habit of right thinking mitigates all the human and physical horror of death far more effectually than the alleged consolations of what nowadays masquerades as religion. Unpleasant as certain tenets of genuine Christianity may have been to contemplate at certain moments, they at least better satisfied the human craving for truth and certitude than the emasculated superstitions of the modern obscurantist.

[1] *Spinoza*, by the Right Hon. Sir F. Pollock, p. 348.

INDEX

ALLEN, GRANT, 6 *n.*
Ancestor-worship, 17
Animism, 6, 16 *sq.*, 21, 27–116, 119
Appreciations, 92
Arabian Mind, 30
Aristotle, 4, 28, 30 *sq.*, 32, 140, 142
Arminian writings, 94
Arthurianism, 61 *sq.*
Arts-and-Sciences, 90
Aryanism, 60 *sq.*

BAILDON, EDGER, 53
Barrett, Professor, 91, 97 *sq.*, 104, 109
Bastian, Charlton, 46, 57, 77
Bayle, 49
Beam, A. W., 67, 69
Bradley, 56
Brahmanism, Dr., 106
Brewster, 139
Brunel, Emily, 150
Browning, Robert, 113, 124–25
Bruno, 44
Büchner, 69
Buddhism, 19, 116
Butler, Samuel, 7, 29, 95, 139

CAIRD, EDWARD, 1, 54, 55
Carpenter, Edward, 126 *sq.*
Case, Professor, 69
Catechism, pictorial, 84
Character as an investment, 128 *sq.*
Christian centuries and the poets, 120
Church, 84
Clarke, Dr. W. N., 114
Clifford, 46, 47, 72
Cloud, 74, 80
Colleges, 8
"Confessional humanity," 14 *n.*, 110
Consciousness and brain, 80; and spirituality, 78, 84; and will, 87; and personal experience, 84
Conservation of energy, 78 *sq.*
Corn, Wm., 130
Crawley, A. E., 18 *sq.*
Creighton, Bishop, 5
Crozier, Dr. W., 109

DARWIN, 28, 32
Darwinian theory, 67, 68
Death, realities of, 4
Democritus, 18, 44 *sq.*, 80, 148
Dilthey, Dr., 41
Dominicus, C. Lewis, 60
Diomaith, Dr., 25 *sq.*
Dionysus, cult of, 24–25
Drummond, Henry, 121

Duns Scotus, 41 *sq.*

Early Victorian and Other Papers, 124 *n.*
Eleatic school, 27
Epicurus, 32
Ether as a basis of mind, 77, 119

FARRAR, Dean, 134
Fechner, 62–63
Fichte, 55
Frazer, 69 *n.*, 145 *n.*
Funeral customs, 16 *sq.*
Future life, savage hopes of, 14 *sq.*, 146; age of human beings in, 89; desire for, 69, 112–13, 143; "universal belief," 116; and immortality, 136. *See also* Immortality

GHOSTS, 6, 44 *n.*, 103
Gibbon, 141
Gnostics, 37
Gomperz, Dr., 24, 30
Greece, early religion of, 23; philosophy of, 27
Green, T. H., 56

HAECKEL, 65, 69, 72, 75, 77
Hallucination, 103
Harris, Professor, 83
Haunted houses, 104
Hegel, 55, 56 *n.*
Hell, Tertullian on, 130; St. Thomas Aquinas, 131; Hopkins, 131; Spurgeon, 131; Father Furniss, 131; fear of, 111, 145 *sq.*
Hibbert Journal, 83
Hobbes, 44
Hobhouse, L. T., 85
Holmes, O. W., 60
Horace, 5
Hume, 52
Huxley, 83, 137, 145

IDEALIST philosophy, 79 *sq.*
Ideas, doctrine of, 28
Immortality, and moral sanctions, 1–2; and human happiness, 3–5; Egyptian conception of, 21 *sq.*; and Greek beliefs, 23 *sq.*; and Roman beliefs, 33; and inspiration, 56; and consciousness, 60, 72; and future punishment, 66; in the case of animals, 62; and savage races, 69; and science, 72; and spiritualism, 91 *sq.*; and telepathy, 99; and current arguments for, 110 *sq.*; belief in, an instinct, 119; and Christianity, 147; tests of belief in, 149. See also Future Life.
Intelligence, in animals, 86; progress of, 87

JAMES, WILLIAM, 18, 48, 59, 61 *sq.*, 88, 119
Johnson, Dr., 81
Justice, 28

KANT, 52–53, 119, 148

LANDOR, 54
Leibnitz, 31, 44, 47, 57, 73, 148
Locke, 50
Lodge, Sir O., 96, 107, 108, 122 *sq.*, 148
Lotze, 57 *sq.*
Lucretius, 21, 32, 66, 70
Lyall, Sir A., 34

McCabe, J., 55, 76, 80, 85, 86 *sq.*, 117
McTaggart, Dr., 63 *sq.*
Maeterlinck, 123
Maher, Father, 66 *sq.*
Mahommedans, 14, 140
Mallock, 149
Martineau, 1, 120
Maskelyne and Devant, 105
Materialism, 75, 148
Materialists, 51, 67
Materialistic monism, 75
Metchnikoff, 3
Metempsychosis, 23
Mill, John Stuart, 56, 117
—— James, 56
Mind, and matter, alleged differences, 79; evolution of, 76, 84 *sq.*; and brain, 88
Momerie, Dr., 114 *sq.*, 134, 136
Monads, 47, 120
Monadology, 31, 47 *sq.*, 57
Monism, 74
Monists, 67
More, Henry, 46
Munsterberg, 73, 78, 81, 82, 84
Myers, 91, 94 *sq.*, 110, 128

NATURAL religion, 7
Neo-Platonism, 41, 43

PANTHEISM, and philosophy, 55; Indian 27; of the Stoics, 44
Personal immortality. *See* Immortality
Philo, 39
Philosophers, 28, 56; Idealist, 79
Philosophy, Hindu, 13; Greek, 26 *sq.*; Stoic, 32; of the soul, 38; in the eighteenth century, 50; of nineteenth century, 124
Physical causation, 73, 84
Piper, Mrs., 96, 106
Planchette, 92
Plato, 23, 27, 29 *sq.*
Podmore, Frank, 96 *sq.*, 106, 108
Pollock, Sir F., 46 *sq.*, 152
Pomponazzi, 42 *sq.*
Poverty and virtue, 142 *sq.*
Psychical Research Society, 65, 90, 91–92, 99, 112
Purgatory, 37
Pyrrho, 33
Pythagoras, 24

REALITY directly perceived, 80
Reformation, 44
Reincarnation, 13, 57, 116, 148
Religious Persecution, 131, 133, 139 *n.*
Resurrection of the body, 8, 37, 38, 113–14; of the soul, 13
Retribution, 2, 17, 42, 66, 69, 111
Rice, Professor, 118
Riddle of the Universe, 69, 77
Romanes, 3, 73, 74 *sq.*
Rome, early religion of, 33
Romilly, Sir S., 139, 141
Royce, Professor, 58–59
Russell, Bertrand, 31, 67, 137

ST. AUGUSTINE, 39
St. Thomas Aquinas, 38, 41
Salmond, Dr., 116 *sq.*, 146 *sq.*
Santayana, 125, 151
Schelling, 55
Schiller, Dr., 107, 110, 111, 112, 134, 136, 137 *sq.*

Scholasticism, 42
Schopenhauer, 56
Seneca, 34
Shelley, 62
Sidgwick, H., 33
Slade and Home, 105
Smith, Goldwin, 35
Smyth, Newman, 121 *sq.*
Solly, H., 122
Soul, 39 *sq.*, 41; distinction of, in man and animal, 44 *sq.*; pre-existence of, 64; "specially created," 68; born with body, 70; where originates, 88
Spencer, Herbert, 56, 75
Spinoza, 45 *sq.*, 55, 75, 148, 151
Spiritualism and consciousness, 73 and *n.*; and evidence of survival, 108
Spiritualist séances, 97, 104
Spiritualists and Animism, 90
Stephen, Leslie, 4, 140
Swedenborg, 49 *sq.*, 108
Syme, D., 119 *sq.*

TASMANIANS, 87
Telepathy, 95; objections to, 98 *sq.*; and personal immortality, 99; a personal experience of, 99
Tennyson, 3, 53, 122, 124
Transmigration, 13, 16, 57
Tuckett, 93, 96, 98, 103, 105 *sq.*
Tylor, 13, 14 *sq.*, 17

VOLTAIRE, 51

WALLACE, A. R., 88, 105 *sq.*
Weismann, 48
Wells, H. G., 19, 150
Westbury, Baron, 133
Wiedemann, 21
Will, freedom of, 81 *sq.*, 149; Huxley on, 83
Wordsworth, 124
World, moral government of, 55.

YOUNG'S *Night Thoughts*, 113

ZENO, 32

WELLCOME INSTITUTE LIBRARY

WATTS AND CO., PRINTERS, JOHNSON'S COURT, E.C.